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Transnational Development Strategy

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FOR THE POST-SOCIALIST CITIES OF CENTRAL EUROPE

WARSAW, 2013

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Preface
Introduction

The last twenty years of political, social and economic development has generally brought substantial modernisation and improvement of living conditions in urban areas. Some cities, however, particularly industrial ones, remain in a depressed or critical condition with very limited resources for improvement.

The research within the ReNewTown project entitled 'New post-socialist city: Competitive and Attractive', funded by the Central Europe Programme and conducted over a period of 3 years (April 2011 – March 2014), aimed to address the following question: "What to do with the formerly socialist cities of Central and Eastern Europe?".

The research conducted between 2011 and 2013 was based on social surveys, market research and the study of good practice (reports giving results and other details are available online at www.renewtown.eu). The research was advanced through four investment projects: in the Nowa Huta district of Krakow in Poland; in the Jižní Město district of Prague in the Czech Republic; in the city of Velenje in Slovenia; and in the city of Hnúšťa in Slovakia (Fig. 1). These projects served as possible model solutions for districts with a legacy from the socialist past. In the case of Nowa Huta in Krakow the problem was a lack of cultural and social events and a shortage of space to cater for these; in Velenje it was the poor condition and poor quality of public spaces between blocks of flats; in Jižní Město in Prague it was unemployment with little employment available nearby; and in Hnúšťa it was a lack of ideas for modern functions for public buildings constructed in the socialist era. All post-socialist cities also struggle with the depressing appearance of much architecture from the socialist period – mainly grey and sometimes somewhat dilapidated buildings and little feeling of belonging to a local community which is rooted in the neighbourhood around one's place of living.

The present volume has been written to outline a **strategy for change which aims to reshape the face of post-socialist cities as competitive and attractive places for living.** It addresses policy makers, officials at all levels of government, social scientists, and above all resident organisations, whose ordinary citizens wish to be actively involved in the improvement of their living environment. The strategy provides a set of alternative possibilities or actions which could be selected as 'main priorities' in trying to deal with particular problems identified in a specific city.

This publication was prepared with substantial assistance from Magdalena Wątorska-Dec, Adam Bierzyński and Robert L. Hodgart.

Fig. 1: Institutions involved in the ReNewTown project.

The current volume is the third publication prepared under the framework of the ReNewTown project. The previous ones were the *Transnational Manual for Urban Revitalisation 'Engage. Brighter Future in Your Hands' and the ReNewTown Handbook of Models 'Post-socialist city: A Role Model for Urban Revitalisation in the 21st Century'.* These main documents together with the results of the various social surveys and market research plus databases of good practice and of consultations of experts, several seminars where our results were presented and discussed, newsletters and several brochures have all helped to provide us with a new substantive basis for preparing the transnational development strategy, once they had all been considered and assimilated and could be utilised to address the purposes of the project, where appropriate. Key elements were also **close cooperation and exchange of experience among the project team members, particularly between researchers and practitioners from local and regional government.** The present publication is therefore a product of collaboration between all the participants of the ReNewTown project.

The post-socialist heritage of the cities of Central and Eastern Europe has become a source of many economic, social and even infrastructural constraints and problems for future development. However, some positive elements of this heritage have also become more noticeable. Current problems and challenges faced by urban areas with a socialist legacy (cities and towns with districts constructed and developed in the socialist period) derive from low standards of housing, unattractive architectural appearance, wasteful usage of space, a lack of local cultural and social events and many other issues. In general, the current living conditions in those cities or districts affect not only the economic, social and cultural situation of their contemporary inhabitants, but also the overall image of the city and its economic performance, both currently and probably into the future.

The Transnational Development Strategy (TDS), in spite of the fact that it is based directly on case studies from Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia and Slovakia, may be applicable to the whole post-socialist region of EU and Eastern Europe. In our research particular attention was paid to the following problems: the shortage of space for and the lack of local cultural and social events; the poor condition and quality of housing and other buildings; low quality of public spaces between blocks of flats; unemployment and a lack of nearby places of work in the neighborhood; the soulless appearance of much architecture from the socialist period; low identification with or attachment to the neighborhood as a place to live and, frequently, the lack of a sense of there being any established local community; and the absence of the idea that new, more modern functions could be found for public buildings constructed in the socialist era.

The TDS as a whole consists of several chapters organised into three parts, which reflect the thinking of R.P. Rumelt (2011) on good strategy. He recommends the following structure: the first part, diagnosis, should have an explanation of the nature of the difficulties and

challenges; the second section, guiding policy, should set out an approach chosen to cope with and overcome the problems identified in the diagnosis; and the third part should consist of actions which should be coordinated for efficient implementation of the guiding policy. Therefore, here the first part is devoted to the aims of the development strategies in theory and in practice (Chapter 1), to the post-socialist context of urban issues (Chapter 2), and to the current scale of urban problems (Chapter 3). The second part deals with the guiding policy and is concerned with the impact of European integration policies (Chapter 4), with the formulation of the mission and the vision of the development strategy (Chapter 5) and with the main strategic objectives and the priorities and relations among them (Chapter 6). The third part concerns operational objectives and their implementation together with relevant case studies and alternative scenarios (Chapter 7). In the last Chapter, serving as a conclusion, the author addresses the difficult question of what to do with these post-socialist cities. Accepting the fact that since 1989 everyday practice has already transformed much post-socialist urban space, the author focuses on ideas for future development and on modern strategic thinking. An outline of how the Transnational Development Strategy was developed is presented in Fig. 2.

Strategy building plan

Diagnosis	Guiding policy	Coherent Action
Understanding the nature of post-socialist cities and the contemporary problems.	Formulation of mission, vision and main strategic objectives	Selection of operational objectives, implementation, good practice

What to do with the post-socialist cities?
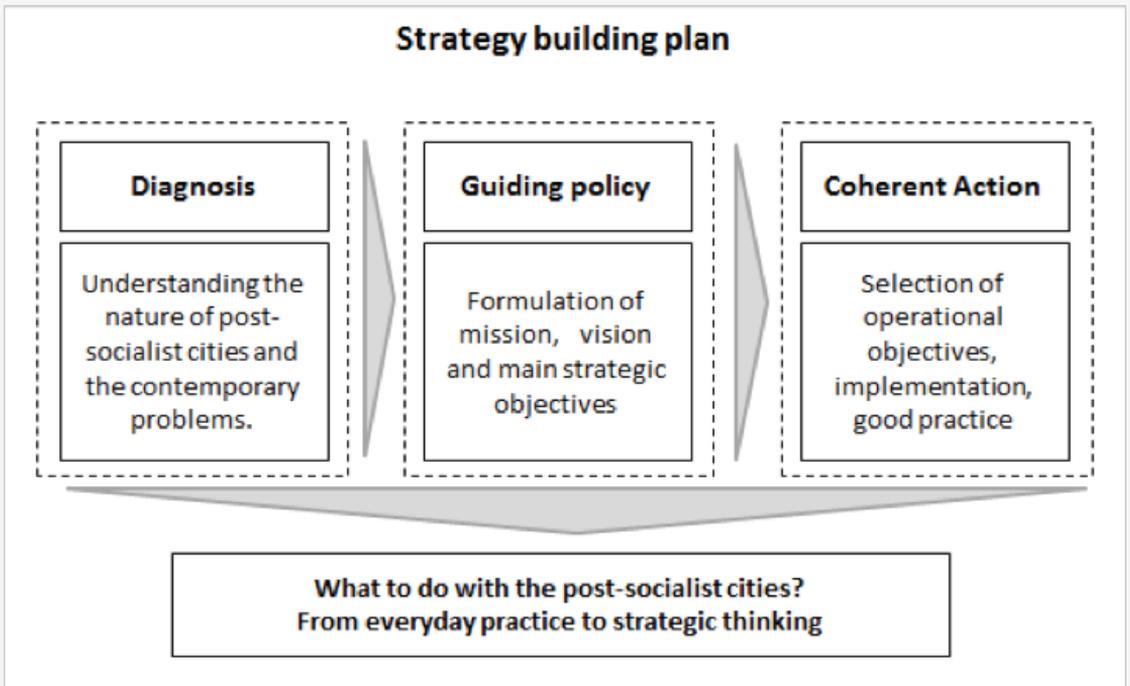**From everyday practice to strategic thinking**

Fig. 2: Plan for building a strategy.

The aim of this part is to present an introduction to our strategic thinking and to the formation of our concepts and then to describe and examine the nature of post-socialist cities and their contemporary problems. It argues that geography and location in space do matter, as well as history, economy, ideology and politics. To think about its future in a strategic way, we very often need to adapt our ideas to the particular character of the place or area under consideration and try to understand how this character has been shaped or even determined by its particular geographical context.

1. Aims and subject of the development strategy

The idea of this kind of strategy has become a very popular topic, both in the media and in social and political science, as well as in everyday conversation. The notion of strategy, however, can be understood and used in different ways and in reality covers a wide range of meaning. Thus it is necessary to define the sphere, domain and explicit meaning of this notion as used in the present context. Here, it is concerned first of all with the social, economic and political issues of urban areas in former socialist cities and with their current governance. The aim of the development strategy has been defined by the requirement of the project. It is intended that the Transnational Development Strategy (TDS) will contribute to the formation in Central and Eastern Europe of a new way of thinking about urban governance, management practice and strategic planning in urban and intra-urban realms. We focus on change in social and living conditions – specifically on improvements and on how good practice in individual cases may be translated into development strategies applicable across the wider international urban domain of the post-socialist European areas. The basic idea of the ReNewTown project is to exploit the experience and knowledge gained over the last 20 years of relevant initiatives – both current and past.

Box 1. Objective of the project

"The ReNewTown project objective is to create more balanced territorial development by reducing the disparities between districts within towns and cities in the Former Eastern Bloc Countries. We focus on reducing these disparities by enhancing the quality of urban areas in districts with a socialist burden. … The project will create useful instruments to correct the detected weaknesses across the Central Europe region and, by its results, improve on quality of life, work and leisure." (ReNewTown Application Form 2011, author: M. Wątorska-Dec).

The results of the research and observations made on the improvements carried out should contribute to the process of adapting post-socialist cities to contemporary social and economic conditions by suggesting the best ways to improve the quality of life in urban areas with a socialist legacy. Our analysis will try to provide practical knowledge on how to overcome the problems of these areas and how to take advantage of their particular situations. It will also attempt to assess which revitalisation programs are the most effective and how the local community can participate in them. Our TDS has concentrated on the social and economic dimensions but also on material aspects i.e. technical infrastructure and the built environment together with the transformation of architecture and the urban landscape (Figs. 3, 4 and 5).

Fig. 3: Post industrial landscape Hnúšťa (Slovakia)

Fig. 4: Neglected post-industrial areas in Hnúšťa (Slovakia)

The Transnational Development Strategy should have included more forms of social, cultural and economic initiatives aimed at fostering greater community cohesion so that it is strengthened vis-à-vis private and individual interest. The strategy should be treated as a policy response to urban problems like unemployment generated by de-industrialisation, increasing socio-spatial disparities and growing deprivation and as a general response to urban decline. While promoting strategic attitudes to solving some urban problems specific to post-socialist cities and districts, this strategy document includes general sets of ideas which could be the basis for action taken by cities elsewhere sharing similar problems (e.g. the social and economic consequences of de-industrialisation in a globalising world).

The final outcome may be the re-invention or at least reshaping of post-socialist cities as competitive and attractive places of living. This is a need of the highest priority and a new challenge, not only for Central European cities but also for the whole European Union in terms of social cohesion, modern efficient governance and environmental issues within a contemporary world driven by global urbanisation and competition. It is hoped that the Transnational Development Strategy will contribute to the EU's policy of promoting the 2020 perspective of enhancing 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' in urban areas; also, it is in accordance, in a global perspective, with the motto of the Shanghai Expo: **"Better city, better life".**

Fig. 5: Dominance in the urban landscape of prefabricated blocks of flats in the Służew nad Dolinką area in Warsaw.

1.1. The strategy's target groups

The processes of transformation of post- socialist cities, since the very beginning until the present, have been occurring within a dominant neo-liberal political context. The broad policy which has developed in Central European countries can be defined generally as a reliance on market mechanisms. However, some regional specificity remains which concerns particular sets of social, economic and spatial policies affecting urban development. In the process of the post-1989 transformation the role of spatial and strategic planning has been evolving from abandonment or disregard of its role at the beginning of transformation to a gradual re-implementation in a new form. Spatial and strategic planning from the socialist era was dominated by the ideological priorities of communism. **The transformation from a centrally planned economy to a market economy resulted in spatial and strategic planning becoming dominated by neo-liberal attitudes.** Therefore planning (particularly spatial planning) and development strategies concerning nearly all elements of everyday economic and social life have been shaped by a greater need for market efficiency. A question then arises: why should the interests of the whole society, understood as a mature civil society, not receive more consideration? The proposals in the present document will therefore try to contribute to strengthening the processes of democratisation and to encouraging the formation of civil societies by putting forward frameworks, ideas and practices which facilitate the expression of local communities' interests in the longer term (i.e. strategic) perspective.

The process of strengthening a strategic approach, though evident in some European countries since the 1960s, has returned to the agenda in Central Europe as a result of the EU regional policy, particularly after the 2004 enlargement. In practice, institutional governance through setting development strategies and through spatial planning has again been influencing the allocation of resources in urban space, though with much more concomitant impact from 'market forces'. This has happened due to the fact that the dynamics of political, economic and social change have led to the re-evaluation of particular locations in urban space through their now being assessed according to market criteria. In fact, it can be argued that the dynamics of urban change under the new market conditions could now benefit from a long term development strategy which could shape the type of activity and land use of an area, its location and character. Ideally, such a strategy should have social approval and support due to its being in the interest of all, or at least most, urban dwellers.

The basic elementary tools or instruments for the promotion of the cohesion policy in the European Union are the provision of 'know how', examples of good practice and of general experience which are possible to implement in a variety of social and economic contexts. The potential end users of the strategy presented may well be, first of all, decision makers representing planning, local and regional authorities. Recent history has shown that local governance has generally become more effective in solving the majority of urban problems

than centralised authorities. Since democratic institutions allow inhabitants to participate in everyday urban life, identifying and defending their interests, all involved need new ideas on how to encourage and facilitate such participation. While supporting in these ways such institutional trends in the transformation of urban space and social change, we do not forget about local interest groups. The Development Strategy, as an approved official document, may serve as a source of reliable information, may encourage a more strategic way of thinking and increase the participation rates of local groups in the amelioration of their own urban surroundings. Our strategy cannot encompass the complete mesh or network of all local interests, but we hope it may serve as a framework or template for helping to identify and consider these in specific real contexts.

Box 2. Institutions involved in the project

The target groups of the ReNewTown project extend far beyond the eight public institutions from 5 countries directly involved in its implementation. The former 8 comprise:

- ◎ *the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw (PL);*
- ◎ *the C.K. Norwid Culture Centre from Kraków (PL);*
- ◎ *the Municipality of Velenje (SI);*
- ◎ *the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (DE);*
- ◎ *Metropolitan District 11 of Prague (CZ);*
- ◎ *the Regional Development Agency of Ústí Region, PLC (CZ);*
- ◎ *the Agency for the Development of the Gemer region (SK);*
- ◎ *and the Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana (SI).*

In addition, the ReNewTown project engaged with the following target groups in partnership, co-operation, consultation and research: 171 bodies in the public sector (e.g. local, regional and national governments); 139 businesses and agencies in the private sector (mainly entrepreneurs operating in housing estates under consideration in the research); and over 200 citizens and experts (e.g. urban landscape experts), who directly participated in the surveys.

Source: ReNewTown project.

In general, the proposed development strategy will try to serve as a model enabling the interests of local communities, including those represented by NGOs, to be recognised and taken into account in a wider urban context. It may become an aid in the process of formulating development strategies for local and urban enterprises, part of the local development strategies prepared by local governments and regional authorities. It should contribute to the concept of the New Public Management as a policy that aims at modernising urban local government and making it more efficient. Particularly in the situation where the vast majority of local authorities do not have a strategy of their own, it may be treated as a proposal to create one.

We believe that the document presented, or parts of it, may be used to help determine the priorities for particular cities. The strategy, however, required a selection of priorities to allow a focus on the most important problems and not the extension of priorities to satisfy all types of local interests at once. Therefore, 'our strategy' should provide a list of alternative actions or measures for dealing with particular problems identified as 'the priorities'.

The document's target groups include policy makers, public officials, social scientists and, above all, residents' organisations, ordinary citizens wishing to be actively involved in the process of improving their living environments. **The strategy is not for 'the cities', but for individual and collective actors and urban communities.**

1.2. Specificity of the strategy

The capitalist industrial economy formed and then reshaped the contemporary cities of Western Europe. In Central and Eastern Europe, however, the socialist version of an industrial economy imposed by political means produced a different type of city. Due to the post-1989 return of a market economy and advent of democracy, specific processes of change occurred in this part of Europe. For example, in its latest report (2013) entitled *The State of European Cities in Transition 2013* the United Nations HABITAT agency, which concerns it self with human settlements and sustainable urban development, provides a summary of 20 years of reform in 23 post-socialist countries, which does recognise the specificity of cities in Central and Eastern Europe and also their intra- regional differences. A key finding and prominent message of the report was that: *"At the beginning of transformation there was widespread belief that local democracy and free markets would bring the solutions to all urban problems. This proved to be wrong, because change was, often by necessity, embarked upon in haste and not always based on reliable forward looking policy, legislative and regulatory foundation."* (p. 8).

The post1989 transformation was characterised for several of its initial years by the rejection of planning of all kinds. This was a reaction to decades of experience of the communist

practice of central planning of the economy which proved not to be effective. This rejection particularly affected regional and strategic planning: regional policy together with strategic planning were perceived as of minor importance and were neglected until the spatial concentration of problems accumulated to the point where they became political issues. Till then a tacit assumption had prevailed that market mechanisms could completely replace central planners in the allocation of resources (Węcławowicz 1996).

The revival of regional and strategic planning occurred, to a large extent, through the impact of examples of good practice from the European Union, particularly after the 2004 enlargement, and through demand from the re-empowered local authorities within reformed structures of local government. As a consequence, currently there are no large cities in Central Europe without some type of document setting out a strategic plan for development. However, comparing the ways in which strategic plans for cities are produced in Western Europe with a description of how strategic plans are formed in post-socialist cities, S. Tsenkova (2007, p. 467) pointed out three elements in the transformation process which create quite a different context for the latter i.e. the transition to democracy, to the market and to democratic governance.

Partly as a result of these differences and their involving on-going processes of change, there are several general problems which can complicate and disrupt strategic planning in post-socialist cities: limited consultation and social participation; changing political support for strategic plans once established; rather wasteful focusing on certain priorities or issues due to lobbying by a variety of interest groups; a lack of effective institutions for creating, supporting and implementing plans; and the lack of a hierarchy of priorities and objectives to set an appropriate context.

The 'transnational dimension' of the development strategy presented for post-socialist cities in Central Europe is based on comparative studies. The TDS is the outcome of research conducted in 10 cities and several districts in 5 countries, of analysis of extensive research literature and of dozens of examples of good practice which provided practical insights into what works and what could possibly work as a pattern for implementation in another context. Existing models and strategies both serve as means of identifying the forces that shape urban space. The provisional findings were discussed during several public seminars and interviews with experts on local urban issues. These findings had been based on interviews which had been conducted with three target groups: local people; local business operators; and the representatives of institutions and organisations of local government and the public and NGO sectors. To a certain extent we were thus able to identify the structure of various influential or interest groups operating in cities and obtain insight into their perceptions and evaluation of urban space.

Box 3. A case of participation of local residents in the decision-making process

The analysis of good practice identified and selected by the Czech partners (Prague's 11th Metropolitan District and the Regional Development Agency of Ústí Region PLC) shows a significant involvement of local communities in the planning and decision-making process. The majority of improvements were preceded by surveys and public consultations with the participation of local residents, property owners, employees of local companies and institutions as well as representatives of local government.

Moreover, there were a few strategic programmes pointed out as focusing on the regeneration of public spaces and blocks of flats in the Czech Republic:

'Regeneration of the South City and South City study – a place to live' – developed by ReNewTown's project partner, the Municipality of Prague's 11th District;

The Integrated Urban Development Plan (acronym IBRM) of the Integrated Operational Programme (IOP) implemented by the Ministry for Regional Development;

Programme for the regeneration of housing estates MMR;

Operational Programme Prague – Competitiveness in the area of the environment – Revitalisation of Territory (one of the programmes co-financed by ERDF).

Source: ReNewTown project.

The most challenging problem, however, is the **lack of explicit urban policies at the national levels and the local levels.** Elements of such policies do exist, but they are fragmented and dispersed across various legal documents and can be found in various planning concepts which are not brought together in a coherent way. There are also problems concerning the instability of urban policy resulting from frequent changes and the lack of a long term perspective or any strate- gic planning. The most important weakness of any strategic document, however, is the lack of political will by local governments or institutionalised social groups which will operate in the longer term as supporters of the implementation of such documents. **Very frequently, the strategy is prepared by external experts and will rarely be treated by local communities as their own.** Another weakness also arises from the preparation of the document only for the purpose of attracting external investors, grants or subsidies (for example EU National and Regional Funds or other resources).

The nature of the target areas - the post-socialist districts as defined in the project – may suggest that an area-based approach to the strategy is particularly suitable. This approach has certain limitations, however, as it can be restricted by the necessity for an integral approach to the formation of a strategy for urban policy at the level of the whole city. The TDS, as

defined in the ReNewTown project, essentially needs to focus on specific areas with a strong post-socialist legacy. However, since these areas are part of a much larger whole (i.e. the wider, contemporary, functioning urban system), they can potentially affect other areas within their own city or even cities further afield.

All processes taking place on an urban or regional scale do not fall neatly and precisely within municipal boundaries. At the same time, in spite of the fact that on national and European level politicians are trying to encourage strategic planning across boundaries, local authorities need specific tools designed according to the particular character of the territory over which they have jurisdiction. In general areas with a heavy socialist legacy, whose built environments and resources at the beginning of the market transformation were evaluated negatively, need more attention than areas of booming development. By definition, an area-based approach is therefore prevalent here but in places attention is given to significant elements at the scale of the whole city.

The elements of the TDS could be implemented on a local level with the basic city strategy as an integral part of it. Consequently, particular elements of the TDS can be selected as priorities, depending on local requirements and objectives. Nevertheless, **the strategy is a guide to what has to be implemented in the urban strategy and in what way.**

Box 4. Successful transformation of a problem area: the case of Urban Development Corporations in the UK

In the 1980s in an effort to reverse the process of inner city decline, the UK government set up Urban Development Corporations (known as UDCs). The aim of these UDCs was to regenerate inner city areas with large amounts of derelict and unused land by taking over planning responsibility from local councils. These UDCs had the power to acquire and reclaim land, convert old buildings and improve infrastructure through the investment of government money. These UDCs also attracted private sector investment through offering companies reduced taxes and other benefits and in doing so they promoted industrial, residential and community developments. One of these corporations 'The London Docklands Development Corporation' generated changes to the area (between 1981 & 1998) which resulted, among other things, in the creation of new open spaces (150 ha), pedestrian and cycle routes and bridges, the Ecology Park, planting of 200,000 trees, lowering unemployment, 2,700 businesses trading, building the City Airport, TV studios and office buildings for newspapers (e.g. the Guardian) in the Canary Wharf business complex plus building a total of 22,000 new houses. These investments transformed an abandoned part of London into a vibrant part of the city

Source: geobytesgcse.blogspot.com

Urban problems are usually concentrated in particular neighborhoods or they concern certain types of people or social groups. The str**ategy therefore needs to deal with the issues at the appropriate level. H**ence an assumption was made that a strategy aimed at creating a more cohesive society should begin at the most local level at which spatial concentrations of particular problems or of social groups adversely affected by problems occur i.e. specific blocks of flats or groups of houses or particular housing estates or larger units like districts or zones. This approach was partly implemented in the project.

The successful implementation of the TDS will depend on the adoption of a long-term perspective by urban local authorities and their administrations and by other urban policy makers as regards their practices and actions. However, the long-term and the short-term perspectives may often be in conflict due to the way policy generated at the highest level of the EU may change and thereby affect areas at very local levels such as districts or neighborhoods. A key aspect of implementation also concerns the proper place for urban strategies within the hierarchy of objectives defined at the national and regional levels. In fact, it can be argued that the TDS put forward here gives some indication, though indirectly, of changes needed in the way whole cities are governed in this post-socialist realm of Central Europe.

2. The post-socialist context

The current situation in the cities of the EU within the Central European countries discussed here is mainly a product of historical development in 2 recent eras: the period of over 40 years of an imposed socialist system; and the subsequent period of over 20 years involving the reintroduction of a free market economy and the adoption of a liberal democratic political system. The latter period was also affected significantly by a range of impacts from integration into the EU. The roots of the current problems can therefore often be traced to legacies from the socialist past, including the persistence of certain attitudes and a certain mentality formed then, but also (somewhat paradoxically perhaps) to the adoption of neo-liberal concepts of development, together with a nearly 'ideological' certainty of belief in the efficacy of the 'invisible hand of the market'.

The scale and the rate of transformation have changed the cities in this region which, to a large extent, were unprepared to compete in a global market. The shift from control by central government to more local control (i.e. by regional, city or district authorities), essentially governance of urban space under a new system of revived 'real local self-government' was a learning process, which in some cases cotiues until now. The return of market mechanisms, together with changes in the land and housing ownership structure, resulted in an increase in the number of actors competing for urban space and in the rules of spatial allocation (and

migration) of urban dwellers changing from political to market criteria (Węcławowicz 1992, 1996, 1998 & 2002). Among the direct consequences were an increase in socio-spatial disparities, on-going change in urban landscape and architecture and some social and symbolic reassessment of urban space. Particularly in the central parts of cities, land use has tended to change in function from administrative or political to commercial and has tended to become more intense (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Land use change - the prominence of the 'socialist realist' architecture of The Palace of Culture reduced by post-socialist skyscraper offices.

As a result of the fundamental forces of transformation mentioned above, since the beginning of the 1990s a new pattern of social and spatial inequalities has emerged beginning with Polish, Hungarian and Czech cities (Węcławowicz 1992, 1996, 1998 & 2002; Andrusz et al. 1996; Enyedi 1998; Ladany 2002; Hamilton et al. 2005; Sykora 1993, 1999, 2005 & 2009; Zborowski 2005; and, more recently, many others, for example K. Stanilov 2007).

A number of comparative perspectives on the transformation are also provided by comparative analysis of changes between two national censuses: the last under the communist regime and the first after the transformation but just before European Union enlargement in 2004. These were conducted in all Central European countries. For example, the Atlas of Warsaw (Stępniak et al. 2009) statistically demonstrated a radical increase in socio-spatial differentiation in all aspects of social and economic life in intra-urban space. This was confirmed as well by detailed study of the changes in various measures of socio-demographic segregation (Marcińczak et al. 2012 & 2013).

Box 5. The change from a political function into an economic one

At present, some buildings assessed as 'valuable heritage' are identified as such under the heading of socialist heritage. In spite of the fact that they were constructed in the socialist period they are protected as architectural monuments and defined as cultural heritage according to legislation in each country. However, ideas for modernisation, renovation and conversion of these buildings, identified as socialist in function or in form, have led to the improvement of visual aspects of the buildings, which have become more congruent with contemporary standards. Such an approach has proved that new ideas for adapting post- socialist buildings, which may be still important for local communities and in the built environment of the city, can be successful and can lead to the redefinition of the former functions in a more modern way. In each former socialist country we can identify an example of such a transformation. In the case of Warsaw the most strikingly symbolic was the change of the former headquarters of the Communist Party into a stock exchange. In the case of Ljubljana the best example was the creation of the Celica hostel in the renovated building of a former military prison of the Yugoslav National Army.

Gradual modernisation and the ending of infrastructural constraints together with new modern housing developments have brought in a **revalorisation of space.** For example, many of the housing estates built in the socialist era have been downgraded in public opinion in relative terms (Figs. 7, 8, 9 and 10). Concomitantly, the **process of intra-urban migration** has been characterised by the relocation of the 'winners' of the transformation process to new and better housing and this has left behind the 'losers' of the transformation in large former socialist housing estates, which are more affordable for poorer urban dwellers and new poorer immigrants.

Fig. 7: Panel based type of construction in Ursynów in Warsaw.

Fig. 8: Panel based type of construction in Velenje.

Fig. 9: Panel based type of construction in District 11 in Prague.

Fig. 10: Demolition of a prefabricated building in Leipzig (A. Haase)

The de-industrialisation processes, initiated before the collapse of real socialism in Central Europe, overlap with the post-socialist transformation, accelerating changes in employment structure, which have become among the most important phenomena generated by the new social structure of cities. In general, the decrease in the number of industrial jobs was not easily replaced by booming employment in the service sector, leaving **former industrial workers unemployed.** This shift in the employment structure remains till now an unresolved problem in formerly industrial cities not only in Central Europe but also in many urban areas of the developed world.

Box 6. New phenomena which have shaped post-socialist urban space:

1. *The return of the market mechanism and particularly the emergence of the importance of land rent.*

2. *The changes in the ownership structure of land from not strictly defined or state owner ship to local government or private ownership.*

3. *The shift of control over space from central to local levels, mostly through the revival of local government and the formation of new local interest groups.*

4. *The radical increase in the number of actors competing for particular locations in urban space.*

5. *The changing rules of spatial allocation for people and economic activities from political to market criteria.*

6. *The transformation of employment structure from domination by the production sector (mostly industry) to that by the service sector, and the formation of a new social structure generated by the shift in the employment structure.*

Source: Węcławowicz, G. (1992 & 1996).

The post-socialist heritage consists not only in industrial heritage with its landscape, material and physical structures, but also in the social and demographic structures of urban society. Against the background of the fairly rapid demographic changes affecting all European countries in recent decades, cities in Central and Eastern Europe have witnessed their own **fundamental shifts in demographic behavior,** which have been essentially similar and parallel to those in W. Europe though they have generally taken place later and perhaps more rapidly. These changes have sometimes been characterised through the concept of a Second Demographic Transition for Central Europe; they have overlapped with and seem to have accelerated changes generated by the basic social and economic transformation since 1989. The net effect seems to have been to augment the rate of change of various demographic components and parameters. As a result the decline in both the birth rate and family size has been steeper and the increases in the number of single parent families and in the divorce rate have probably been sharper, while there has been a radical increase in cohabitation other than through marriage. In addition, an increase in residential migration has become an important component of the socio-spatial evolution of cities in the post-socialist era.

Box 7. Voluntary social activity

The socialist era is commonly stigmatised, but some positive aspects of the period should be highlighted as well. The city of Velenje in Slovenia, as an industrial centre, was developed in the 1950s and 1960s – including its infrastructure, administrative buildings and new housing units – thanks to the help of volunteers. These social values rooted in the socialist period of Velenje's development have been maintained until the present in the form of voluntary work done in the spirit of community solidarity. This became evident during the implementation of the ReNewTown pilot project in Velenje through the involvement of the inhabitants in the revitalisation process for their neighbourhoods, specifically through the creation of a multi-functional public space catering for the needs of all generations (Figs. 11 and 12).

Figs. 11 and 12: The President of Slovenia kicks-off a project for revitalising public space in Velenje

When assessing the condition of post-socialist cities in Central Europe in terms of socio-spatial disparities, it is fair to state that this phenomenon is the result of inherited problems and structures from the socialist period, but is also a product of over two decades of neo-liberal policy. The rapid formation of new socio-spatial patterns has involved elite enclaves appearing in new, modernised or redeveloped parts of cities while some older neighbourhoods and housing estates deteriorate and become increasingly inhabited by the poor and elderly. Such increasing social contrasts and disparities in wealth, together with the lack of participation in the common lifestyle of urban society, create a basic challenge for urban policy on a national and local scale. In this situation, the rebirth of local self-government at an urban scale, and its gradual evolution into efficient and democratic institutions can become one of the main factors in the process of civil society formation, which can be a very valuable social resource for urban citizens in Central European countries. Further strengthening of civil society in urban communities should be one of the best guarantees for a more cohesive society in the future.

The critical review provided by the Habitat report in 2013 on 20 years of transformation in the post-socialist countries also recognised several attendant phenomena which were characteristic of urban development in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989. The transformation from centrally-planned economies to democratic and market-based systems, according to the Habitat assessment, was not always based on reliable policy, legislative and regulation considerations and was driven by the *"desire to pass through the transitional phase rapidly, sound forward-looking policy has at times been compromised by much shorter political time horizons and opportunistic interventions",* and the report goes on to suggest *"More attention is required to delivering the regulatory frameworks and interventions that can address the undesirable exclusion, inequality and human suffering that followed the rapid transition."*

As a first problem, the Habitat report drew attention to declines in urban and rural populations, particularly the **depopulation of smaller cities.** However, in considering the latter conclusion, more recognition needs to be given to the problem of defining urban areas, to the influence of district and municipal boundaries and to new facets of urban development, particularly suburbanisation. Taken together, these considerations, particularly extensive suburban growth, generate a need for new structures of governance to deal with the new forms of urban configurations at the regional scale. So, in reality what were generally perceived as urban population declines are in many cases actually urban growth, provided the larger urban region is taken into account, as is often done for large urban agglomerations.

The introduction of local government reform, which aimed to dismantle central government control, according to Habitat has not been fully successful.

The present volume stresses the **lack of coherence between regional policy** as formulated at the national level **and strategic documents dealing with urban issues,** which indicates the lack of a well thought out urban policy. In addition, **the lack of full fiscal decentralisation** which should "enable local authorities to perform effectively and execute their traditional and new responsibilities" has allowed the constant allocation of new responsibilities from state level to the lower level of governance without concomitant allocation of proportionate financial resources. A similar conclusion is drawn in the OECD 'Urban Policy Review – Poland 2011'.

These urban areas in the post-socialist era succeeded in the European and global competition market only if they already had a diversified economy and had acquired an ability to attract international investment capital. This was the case most of all for capital cities and for large cities which had the potential to compete in the European market and could take a longer term perspective. However, to do so they **still needed thorough and extensive modernisation of infrastructure and governance, plus good strategic planning and improvements in living conditions and environment.**

Such possibilities are not really open to many of the other cities, particularly cities at the secondary or tertiary levels of the urban hierarchy and small and mono-functional cities, so the futures of such cities, according to the Habitat report of 2013, depend on **opportunities to find new functional roles** with respect to their rural hinterlands and/or to exploit possible advantages of their geographical location, for example in the vicinity of major European transport corridors or through further development of their agricultural and tourism potential.

3. The current scale of the problems and issues

The first analysis of what current problems were perceived by the public as important was based on research conducted through social surveys involving interviews with the inhabitants of the Central European cities selected, which were characterised by a high share of housing stock constructed during the socialist period. The groups of respondents involved were interviewed on the quality of life, public spaces and buildings in the towns or city quarters in question, and they were also asked to review the activities of their local government and comment on statements made regarding current or recent problems associated with living in these locations. Other goals of the survey were to identify development opportunities, increase the attractiveness of post-socialist housing estates and possibly stimulate some contribution by local people in removing development obstacles to development. Other goals of the survey were to identify development opportunities, increase the attractiveness of post-socialist housing estates and possibly stimulate some contribution by local people to removing obstacles to development. According to residents, **the main problems related to living in their local neighbourhoods were the small number of parking places and the derelict nature of public space.** Respondents sometimes associated these problems with other problems that concerned them, including an increased risk of social pathologies like vandalism, drug abuse, crime rates above the average and a decreased feeling of safety. In the opinion of respondents, improvement in the quality of life, particularly in the prefabricated housing estates, depended on increased safety and a better quality of public space (Figs. 12, 13 and 14).

Box 8. The set of commonly shared problems stressed by partners from local government:

1. Shortage of space for and lack of local cultural and social events;
2. Poor condition and quality of buildings and of public space between blocks of flats;
3. Unemployment and few places of employment in the vicinity;
4. Depressing appearance of much architecture from the socialist era;
5. Residents have little sense of belonging to a local community or to their place of living;
6. Lack of ideas for new/modern functions for public buildings constructed in the socialist era.

(ReNewTown Application Form 2011, author: M. Wątorska-Dec).

Fig. 13: Graffiti and vandalisation of an urban building in Nowa Huta, Kraków.

Fig. 14: Undeveloped and neglected public space, illustrating also a lack of cultural facilities in District 11 in Prague.

Fig. 15: Undeveloped and neglected public space, illustrating also a lack of cultural facilities in Ursynów in Warsaw.

3.1. Tracing the roots of current problems

The basic roots of many current problems lie in the social and economic process of de-industrialisation which resulted in structural unemployment which in turn overlapped with the political transformation and the transition to a market economy. Possible lessons that might be drawn from the western part of Europe, which witnessed the problems of de-industrialisation decades earlier, are only relevant on a very limited scale, due to several factors: the much greater inefficiency of socialist style industrial production in the former socialist countries; the low quality of industrial production (particularly for the consumer market); the 'revolutionary' nature of the very quick changes involved; and the sudden loss of domestic and international markets. As a result, **unemployment has become a regular, chronic problem in the majority of industrial areas.** Thus the forces of the free market were selective spatially and did not bring prosperity to all post-industrial areas. Without significant support from public resources, according to neo-liberal economic doctrine the majority of post-industrial areas would be unable to prevent economic and social decline.

The current situation in all Central European cities is shaped by the following phenomena: the economic downturn; competition from newly emerging markets; climate change; demographic and migration issues; energy problems; efficiency in finding solutions to the challenging issues of accessibility and connectivity to other urban centres in Europe and further afield; and EU enlargement. In the creation of a future development strategy the most important **political dilemma** concerns striking **a balance between policies aimed at making cities more competitive and policies concerned with more socially inclusive urban development.**

The transformation from 1989 onwards towards a market economy resulted in changes in the functional structure of cities and towns. While capitals were usually successful in following the new rules and patterns of a market economy and in adapting to competition, the situation in other cities (e.g. regional centres of various sizes) was sometimes less positive. In combination with economic trends, particularly the decrease in the number of industrial jobs, demographic trends involving migration, a reduction in natural increase and acceleration of population ageing sometimes resulted in a fall in the total population of urban centres.

A declining population size in some post-socialist cities, particularly the former industrial cities, was accompanied by a concentration of specialised tertiary activities in the more successful large cities which led to a polarisation of national urban structures. For Central European cities, which have experienced only population growth since the end of the World War II, **population decline** has become a challenging phenomenon. In general, local governments (as well as national) were not prepared for applying any anti-decline strategies to ameliorate the consequences of the decline. Demographic decline, however, may be seen also as a chance for improvement in living conditions. On the other hand, decline due to uncontrolled urban sprawl and the process of population aging is difficult to reverse. Cities located in economically depressed and pooer regions may therefore be particularly susceptible to losing their demographic capacity for renewal and growth.

One underlying framework for helping to explain and understand the overall pattern of these changes entails a shift of development paradigm from one involving industrial production still based on heavy consumption of energy and natural resources towards a new, modern, globalised economy and society based on more sustainable development which will be more environmentally friendly and socially cohesive. This may also be labeled as a **shift from a post-industrial society to a post-carbon society.** In addition, the introduction of a neo-liberal political philosophy of urban governance has tended to destabilise the former relation between the public and private sectors, causing radical changes in social perceptions of urban space.

3.2. The views of survey respondents

The social surveys conducted as part of the project involved what were essentially structured interviews of groups of respondents from 10 towns: Chomutov and Ústí nad Labem in the Czech Republic, Cottbus and Karlsruhe in Germany, Nowa Huta (a district of Kraków) and Ursynów (a district of Warsaw) in Poland, Hnúšťa and Rimavská Sobota in Slovakia, and Nova Gorica and Velenje in Slovenia. The interviews were conducted with 3 target groups of respondents: residents of the districts selected (327); local entrepreneurs (52); and professionals and officials representing local governments and NGOs (79).

The overall results of these surveys, though they were not necessarily comprehensively representative of each area or group of people involved, confirmed certain common problems affecting post-socialist urban areas. **Two basic types of problems were highlighted:** an increase in social differentiation, particularly social exclusion and spatial segregation (mainly by income); and problems related to the general quality of life, with particular emphasis on the regeneration of housing and public spaces (Fig. 15).

For the residents interviewed, the main problems mentioned in relation to living in their city neighbourhoods are a limited number of parking places, damaged and poorly maintained public spaces and a concentration of pathological phenomena (understood as vandalism, graffiti, drug abuse and a high crime rate). In addition, a high unemployment level (in the case of Hnůšťa and Rimavská Sobota) was believed to be the cause of decreased safety and other social problems.

In the opinions of the residents, a solution to many of the current problems, which would improve the quality of life in areas of prefabricated housing, would be to focus on the improvement of both safety and the quality of public spaces, with the latter being provided with bicycle lanes, pavements (in Velenje and Nowa Huta) and new parking places (Chomutov). In spite of a number of critical remarks concerning particular housing estates, a significant majority did not consider moving out to a different town or district. The survey of residents also identified as significant problems the lack of proper amenities and related services, the absence of social services, the lack of cultural events and little organisation of age-oriented activities.

Evaluation of the quality of life and the level of dissatisfaction of the residents differ substantially by geographical location, ranging from very pessimistic in the cities located in regions which seem in decline or static economically (for example Ústí nad Labem and Chomutov) to very optimistic ones in places located in more prosperous regions (for example the Ursynów district of Warsaw).

The replies of local entrepreneurs stress more than the residents the problems of a high unemployment rate (Hnůšťa, Chomutov), the particular importance of accessibility (on foot and by public transport), the lack of parking places and the unsatisfactory quality of public spaces and buildings in the places in which they conduct their business activity. A nearly universal claim of all in the entrepreneurs' category concerned the bureaucracy of local government and their demand for more financial resources to be made available to stimulate and support new business ventures. In the Ursynów district, the need for the implementation of a local business development programme to help meet the needs of local businesses for growth and expansion was emphasised.

The entrepreneurs' perception of future development differs depending on the dynamics of the economy in the towns and cities in question. In a town suffering from poor economic growth and a higher unemployment rate, business people are more sceptical. Local entrepreneurs in places which are doing well economically see the future more optimistically and they often suggest a number of new strategic measures to be taken aimed at supporting the development of business.

Fig. 16: Typical problems of post-socialist residential areas from District 11 in Prague – undeveloped and neglected public spaces and a lack of parking plus parking problems.

Fig. 17: Typical problems of post-socialist residential areas in Warsaw, undeveloped and neglected public spaces, and a lack of parking places plus illegal parking

3.3. In the light of the models analysed

The list of problems of post-socialist cities recognised in the models analysed in the Handbook of Models already published, provides much more detail, frequently concerned with direct everyday issues, than can be discussed in any depth here. The problems examined there include general issues concerning the deterioration of multi-household buildings, the low construction standards and the use of prefabricated panel technology. Discussion of the latter problems inevitably overlaps with any discussion assessing the state of housing estates characterised by such common conditions as: the low quality of buildings; the poor condition of public space between blocks of flats; the depressing appearance of much architecture of the socialist era (mainly grey, monotonous and often in need of external repairs); the weak level of affiliation of local people with their place of living; and by anonymity and isolation.

In general housing issues and urban policy interventions in the housing domain are very country-specific. For example only in Poland is there an urgent need to increase the number

of housing units, while the issues of financial affordability concern all the countries discussed. The quick privatisations of housing of the 1990s also generated in some cases problems with maintenance costs for the new, less affluent owners and radically reduced the amount of social housing and affordable rental units for other social groups.

As far as maintenance and governance problems are concerned, the absence of clear responsibility for the management and financing of common repairs has often resulted in significant delays in maintenance. Unclear lines of responsibility and the rights of legal owners to their property overlap with the specific individual attitudes of some new owners towards common property. Hence the common areas and parts of buildings are frequently reported to be in a poor condition, often due to the fact that individual owners have neglected or avoided their responsibilities for these common entities, which makes co-ordinated action difficult. Moreover, inability to enforce the rules and obligations of individual apartment owners leads to poor management of common areas and results in limiting the renovation of common elements. In general the lack of responsibility for common areas was mentioned frequently by respondents.

Other problems constantly raised include housing related costs, particularly utility costs, which have generally increased much faster than incomes after the transition, resulting in an inability to pay the standard fees for common maintenance and renovation; moreover, many households have fallen into debt. These problems have often coexisted with unemployment and a shortage of nearby employment in certain districts.

Post-socialist districts are frequently characterised by their **homogenous functional nature:** typically many mainly just consist of housing without areas for services, entailing also a shortage of space for local cultural and social events and for recreational activities; some areas consist almost entirely of industrial space and are only places of work. Many unused green areas without any development plans or with some plans that existed but have never been put into practice (i.e. unfinished modernisation) are sometimes found next to areas with a shortage of parking spaces due to the large number of cars now owned. In spite of the fact that it has been more than 20 years since the transformation, the problem of the lack of ideas for new/modern functions for underutilised public buildings constructed in the socialist era (1945-1989) is still evident.

In the Handbook of Models we also identified a set of problems concerning safety and environmental issues. These included air pollution, environmental noise, the absence of recreational facilities (with particular concern for the fact that children do not have enough safe outdoor play areas), crime, violence, vandalism and the presence of drugs. Another persistent problem has been the low energy efficiency of the panel type of construction used in housing estates of the socialist era. Consequently, the problems of high energy loss and high energy consumption continue, while the introduction of such solutions as thermo-insulation

combined with the renovation of multi-family housing through the replacement of windows, reconstruction and installation of new fittings has often been delayed.

Social change has often become sharply apparent through the advent of new gated communities, whose housing estates have frequently been built in the immediate vicinity of buildings dating back to the socialist period. Such juxtaposition can cause problems of community integration and social cohesion through the contrasts between the residents of the older estates with a high number of households in multi-family housing and the new estates with single-family houses. Acute disparities in income and life style between these two groups of residents can often reflect the low incomes of many pensioners in post-socialist society and the fact that it is difficult for people of retirement age to get employment to supplement their pensions, though many would like to, because of age discrimination in the labour market and other factors. Generally this situation reflects a lack of willingness on the part of the wider society to embrace the concept of active ageing.

The aims of this part are to select and formulate a hierarchy of basic strategic objectives for action, to discuss examples of the implementation of various strategies and to examine case studies of good practice devoted to the improvement of life in post-socialist cities. This selection is guided by the nature of the problems revealed in the preceding sections and also with regard to the impact of policies for integration into the EU. The most important elements in this part concern the mission of the strategy and a vision for the future place of post-socialist districts and cities in EU urban space.

4. The impact of policies for integration into the EU

From the very beginning of the post-1989 transformation and the rebirth of genuinely autonomous local government in Central Europe, examples from many European Union countries have provided leading patterns to follow. In the same period the emergence of an EU urban agenda became more explicitly evident as a result of the Cheshire report of 1988 and the Parkinson report of 1992. The next stage (1994-1999) had to do with the consolidation of the urban agenda by creating the European Urban Audit and the publication by the EU Commission of 'Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: a framework for action' (Antolovsky, Dangschat and Parkinson 2005).

Since 2004, the integration of nearly the entire area of the formerly socialist Central European countries has been under the direct influence of a whole range of EU policies and initiatives concerning various aspects of urban life. Currently, the most important policies are those associated with the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Policy, both of which are of the key importance in revitalising and improving urban infrastructure. Also important is the modern governance concept of subsidiarity, understood as a delegation of as much responsibility as possible to the lower levels of an administrative structure (e.g. to districts, cities or regions) and as performing on the higher or central level only those tasks which cannot be performed on a more local level. However, the shift of greater responsibility to local government and civil society organisations has started to become somewhat problematic. In fact, we can observe gradual but steady erosion of the subsidiarity idea, mostly through allocating responsibilities concerning a number of everyday aspects of social life down the administrative hierarchy without allocation of financial resources to cover the cost of dealing with these responsibilities. This tendency is gradually limiting the efficiency of the institutions of local democracy.

The concepts of the Social Cohesion and Cohesion Policies and the notion of Sustainability are all of great importance and have been introduced gradually. Sustainability was understood as the maintenance of ecological and socio-economic balance by avoiding depletion of natural resources more than necessary. After the EU enlargement in 2004, the paradigm of the Cohesion Policy has been gradually modified from reducing disparities to

mobilising en-dogenous development potential. Recognising territorial cohesion as one of the key objectives of EU and stressing the potential of endogenous growth for reducing disparities have become major tendencies in EU policy (Box 9).

A current basic concern of the European Union is the European 2020 strategy, which is a more general document than any other document focused on urban policy or on aspects of urban policy or than documents setting out other relevant EU policies. Thus, when all the EU policies and initiatives just discussed are taken into account, in spite of not being formulated in a single comprehensive document, urban policy can be seen as an important element of territorial policy in the EU, not least because cities have significant roles to play in practically all the preceding policies and initiatives of EU.

At the EU level there are whole sets of policies, organisations and examples of good practice in urban planning and in formation of local strategies. There is also a variety of ways to access information networks, co-financing opportunities and know-how generated by various programmes such as EU Research Frameworks, INTERREG, URBACT, INTERACT, ESPON, Jessica, and other programmes like Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, combating poverty and social exclusion is within the domain of responsibility of national governments, which furnishes quite a wide range of approaches and practices to learn from. The EU may play a co-ordinating role here by identifying best practice and promoting mutual learning, by proposing EU-wide rules, by making funding available or by guaranteeing, for example, better use of EU funds to support social inclusion and combat discrimination. Since 2004, new EU members from Central Europe have become eligible to apply for expenditure on housing within the ERDF framework. In 2010 the European Commission Inter Service Group on Urban Development published a guide ('The urban dimension in European Union policies 2010') in which EU urban policy then under formation was described in its current state.

Box 9. Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities

The Leipzig Charter is a step towards an agenda for a 'policy on large European cities'. By adopting this document, the EU recognises the important social, cultural and economic role that cities play. The central message in the Leipzig Charter is the necessity for 'integrated strategies and co-ordinated action'. The necessity for an integral approach imposes requirements on the institutional setting in which the policy on large European cities is enacted. All levels of government – local, regional, national and European – have an interest in cities thriving and share responsibility for the success of cities. The Leipzig Charter mentions areas on which urban policy should now focus in all situations:
- dealing with deprived neighbourhoods;
- improving public spaces;
- modernising infrastructure with a focus on saving energy;
- better education for young children and refresher training courses for workers;
- better and more efficient public transport in and between cities.
Source: www.eukn.org

The latest and perhaps most advanced concepts concern the **Europe 2020 strategy** which can be described using three slogans - **smart, sustainable and inclusive** - which define three different general objectives of future development in EU. The 'smart' characteristic emphasises development built on a knowledge-based economy and innovation. Sustainable growth implies respecting resources, particularly through energy-efficient development. The notion of inclusive growth, while concentrating on promoting an economy with full employment, also focuses on social and territorial cohesion. Several other targets were also proposed focusing on various aspects of employment, education, research and innovation, social inclusion, poverty reduction and energy efficiency.

The funds of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund are the EU's instruments for implementing its Cohesion Policy. Dovetailing, hopefully, with the latter policy, **the new EU budget for 2014-2020 will stimulate integrated territorial development using two new tools i.e. Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI) and Community Led Local Development (CLLD).**

Current EU policy documents and programmes are shaped or are being reshaped towards favouring complementarily with the Europe 2020 Strategy. The new cohesion policy for the years 2014-2020 and the Horizon 2020 programme may serve as examples here.

"Cities are the best place to demonstrate how such an intended integrated approach can work. Actions in cities must be integrated by definition, and the whole complexity of elements needs to be considered while developing a strategy for a city development. Every single practitioner knows exactly the number of different aspects that must be taken into account while taking some strategic decisions. All the elements in such fields as energy, employment or social affairs need to work together to assure growth. The development of a city must be smart, sustainable and socially inclusive. Therefore, the increased interest in urban development was a good answer to the new EU2020 challenge. Many of the EU's policies were given a stronger urban focus. One can observe a shift towards a possible future urban policy on the European level. However, the European Union by itself cannot assure the successful contribution of Europe's cities towards the achievement of the Europe 2020 goals without the involvement of the national, but also, and more importantly, the regional and local level." (Olbrycht J., 2013).

The new urban policy on the European level which is under formation will certainly be based on the contribution of policy elements from national, regional and local levels. Urban development plans in the majority of European cities have now been adapted to take account of various EU policies, goals and instruments for achieving those goals, but the Europe 2020 strategy puts forward further, more comprehensive ideas and instruments for responding to the trends of globalisation affecting the entire EU. In spite of these EU policies being formulated 'centrally' and generally appearing to embody a 'top down' approach, in the Eurocities (2009) documents it is stressed

that cities *"can play an important role in alleviating, preventing and tackling social exclusion and poverty by taking flexible and innovative solutions at local level"*. Local urban governments therefore have the ability, though limited to some extent, to manoeuvre within policies set at a national level and at a European level and to respond creatively to trends shaped by the 'invisible hand of the market'.

5. The formulation of a mission and a vision

The future of cities is a subject for many different plans, programmes, missions, visions and strategies produced at different levels from regional, sub regional and metropolitan down to districts and neighborhoods. Usually these are very ambitious, reflecting the aspirations of the urban leaders and their long term aims, but sometimes they are merely political tools in the struggle to maintain political and economic power. For example, the main current objective for London is to become by 2031 "the best big city on earth". Similar rather ambitious objectives for growth strategies have been put forward for nearly every national capital or large city across the globe. In contrast, in the case of the post-socialist urban spaces, the general objectives should be much narrower, at least for the immediate decades ahead, so that they can be widely accepted as both realistic and feasible and avoid losing credibility because they are over-ambitious or are seen as devised to serve mainly rather dubious political ends.

In the perspective of the ReNewTown project the formulation of the mission for the transnational strategy should be very general so that it can encompass a wide range of levels and be relevant to quite specific problems identified in particular cities and districts. Stated simply and shortly, the mission's goal is:

to achieve much better living conditions.

The current condition of the post-socialist districts and cities as described in the first part of the present document clearly necessitates substantial changes. These changes can be defined in various ways according to different priorities, demands or agendas which might be formulated at European (EU), national, regional or local levels. **The vision put forward here is an expression of what these post-socialist districts and cities should look like in decades to come.**

At slightly greater length, the vision proposed here can be expressed in the following broad terms:

the post-socialist cities and their districts should be attractive for their inhabitants, offering modern infrastructure and thriving, sustainable economic bases, comparable to other leading European cities, and having well governed and well organised urban communities with endogenous potential for dynamic future development.

Such a vision is realistic, provided the proposed strategy is implemented in an effective and coherent way, which of necessity must be selective (i.e. it must focus on the most important components), hierarchical (proceeding from the most important to the less important goals and policies) and also realistic in economic and political terms. The objectives selected to accord with the top priorities should be translated into operational objectives which are linked to and supported by examples of their implementation in practice. In addition, the generation of a strategy, together with its associated vision and main objectives, should be an interactive social process which should mobilise and coordinate many players, as P. Healey et al. (1997) suggest. For instance, it should enhance an alliance between the public sector and private developers and any alliances formed around such topics as sustainable development and environmental issues. The accomplishment of such a vision also requires the establishment of groups of leaders from a coalition of various organisations and a fair degree of approval from public opinion.

According to the OECD recommendation *"Strategic visions for cities must develop with close attention to market signals. In general, policy will be most successful where it seeks to advance new developments which, while perhaps small, are clearly demonstrating a capacity to survive in the market; or developments which, while new, build on past specialism and acquired knowledge in an area."* (OECD Report …., p. 80).

6. Main strategic objectives and the hierarchy of priorities

The main strategic objectives may be classified as economic, social, environmental and political (not least as regards modes of governance). The formation of the strategy required focusing attention on the most important aims and actions defined in the most general terms. Setting strategic objectives and goals should be done, if possible, in ways which will guarantee support for such objectives by market forces. For example, market forces may not support a particular economic activity in a particular urban setting. Consequently, locating that activity in the latter setting is likely to generate inefficiency and restrict or damage its viability or success. Following the 'golden rule' that only a very small number of the most important objectives should be selected in the formation of any strategy, we have identified the following four:

1. **Formation of a civil society and expansion of human capital;**
2. **Expanding and improving economic activity;**
3. **Improving the quality of landscape and of housing;**
4. **Ensuring that development is sustainable and energy is used efficiently.**

The formation of a civil society and the improvement of human capital can both be seen as vital objectives. Moreover, the two key elements of this objective can be viewed as pre-conditions, to a large extent, for successful realisation of the other remaining strategic aims. The second objective concerns the local economy together with labour market issues, with particular attention to job creation and to solving unemployment problems. Any solution to such problems is therefore likely to be strongly related to the quality of the work force and also to other resources of human capital available. Therefore, a precondition for the promotion of a knowledge-based economy is high quality of human resources in the area under consideration and a skilful labour force. It can be argued that the existence of a civil society and thriving economic activity will in turn have direct benefits on an area's quality of housing and urban landscape, though a reciprocal relation is also likely to be important. The last objective is concerned with sustainability and development based on saving energy and, as one of the most promising realms for improving living conditions in urban society, can be seen as intricately linked to the previous goals.

The objectives selected above constitute an initial attempt to form a general long-term strat-egy, in which division into sectors (e.g. of the economy) is avoided and which attempts to be comprehensive in social, economic and political terms. One of the main concepts which needs to be linked to the above strategy is that of 'territorialisation' of the development policy, because the latter needs to be linked directly to the local issues and problems of the post-socialist cities. Hence this concept of 'territorialisation' was adopted as an alternative to a centralised approach and to the prevailing use of economically defined sectors and modes of governance. Another pertinent concept in these discussions is the idea of subsidiarity, which is clearly fundamental for civil society. It seems reasonable to suggest that all the objectives just set out in their hierarchical order and aimed at the improvement of living conditions in the post-socialist cities could in fact be integrated into the strategic plans of any city, urban district or neighbourhood in Europe or beyond.

6.1. Formation of a civil society and expansion of human capital

Putting the concept of a civil society and its construction at the top of the objectives in the proposed development strategy requires first of all a clear definition or at least some delimitation of this term's meaning. Civil society is one of the key concepts in social science whose main origin and first formal exposition can be traced to the work of a sociologically minded philosopher of the Scottish enlightenment of the 18th century, Adam Ferguson, but it has been adopted more recently in such fields as politics, economics, governance and media studies. Various definitions have been produced, their differences reflecting the complexity of contemporary urban society, but probably also reflecting various attempts to use the concept as an explanatory tool or as a way of bringing together a wide range of explanatory factors and social processes. It is not our aim here to provide a very precise new definition, but to at least narrow to some degree its range of meanings.

For the purpose of this TDS, our operational definition focuses on a range of groups of people such as voluntary associations, groups of activists, whether formal or informal, and, indeed, any locally based organisations purporting to work and act in the common interest while respecting the needs and rights of other social groups. Thus we can potentially include a wide variety of groups, associations and institutions acting within the area or population under consideration (which could be, say, the inhabitants of a particular city, district or territory inside an urban area). The essence of a civil society is a set of such bodies and institutions (together with their abilities, efficiency and skills in governance), which together have sufficient influence and support to be able to counterbalance the power of the central state (plus its local administrative arms) and also to act as a counter-weight to the power of the market regarding policies and decision making over local issues and problems. To elaborate further, it is perhaps worth emphasising that civil society also encompasses non-governmental and non-profit making organisations, religious movements, 'grass roots' social movements, informal groups and groups formed through social networks of various kinds. This concept partly overlaps with the notion of citizenship and it is an essential element of a democratic system as a whole. It should be remembered that it is also an integral component of a more complete and accurate definition of 'a society'.

The aim of building a good and strong civil society as the most important and leading objective required identification of its basic components. At this level, the essential component, in the case of these post-socialist cities, is **the citizens' involvement in local affairs.** It is argued that the active involvement of inhabitants is the only real guarantee of successful improvement in living conditions in the post-socialist areas discussed here. The second component is the **ability of inhabitants to organise themselves** collectively around well identified interests and aspirations. The third element consists of the skills, techniques and 'know-how' of the local leaders and their ability to influence decision-making institutions by gaining

political support and achieving the final outcomes they desire or winning significant concessions. The fourth element is **the political will of public and central administration to accept and welcome the role of civil society** by promoting and supporting its development and encouraging its participation, not least at the local level. The fifth component, inseparable from all the elements already mentioned, has to do with **improvement of the educational level of the inhabitants** of post-socialist areas. This last component is fundamental to the development of contemporary civilisation and is also one of the starting points in the formation of a knowledge-based society in the near future.

6.2. Expanding and improving economic activity

Economic prosperity at the district level depends on the prosperity of the country, region, metropolitan area and the whole city. A productive economy at these higher territorial levels is essential for providing economic opportunities at lower levels. Policies and measures for stimulating economic development and growth in the longer term, such as tax-free zones, investment in infrastructure facilities, incubators, centres of information and other similar economic initiatives rely to a great extent on the higher levels of government and administration. Nevertheless, the appropriate local government body can shape and promote a local economic strategy in a similar way to the promotion of small and medium sized enterprises at the district level in post-socialist space. The issue of unemployment and the small number of enterprises offering employment in many districts, however, does need much more effective co-operation from various actors.

In general, this key objective must take account of problems in the labour market, particularly unemployment which usually coexists with numerous social problems within urban areas. Therefore, **stimulating local economic activity and creating new jobs** has become a standard aim of economic development in all locally oriented strategies. However, the mere creation of activity is not enough to generate real development and bring the attendant general improvements in quality of life. To be effective locally, new enterprises or employment initiatives ideally need to contribute to raising the general standard of living in an area i.e. generate an **increase in demand or consumption in the area and** thus help to attract more new enterprises or to expand existing ones. A key aspect of this economic objective is that it overlaps with the previous one, i.e. improvement of the level of education of residents is a basic factor in economic development, enhancing the chances of success in the labour market. More specifically, probably one of the most effective ways of ensuring a thriving economy in the contemporary world is to make sure that as many citizens as possible have the relevant skills in information technology to benefit from the digital revolution.

6.3. Improving the quality of housing and of landscape

The basic elements involved in improving the quality of housing and the surrounding landscape, derived to a large extent from the priorities revealed by the respondents to the social surveys, include: renovation and revitalisation; the governance of housing matters; availability and affordability issues; improvement of public space; and the design of the landscape. **The demand for renovation and revitalisation in the post-socialist areas** of Central Europe is probably the most difficult issue discussed here and it partly overlaps with other problems of post-industrial space, which in recent decades have also been among the most important urban concerns in Western European countries. Generally, there is no universal formula for solving these problems and a variety of solutions have been adopted at national, regional and local scales. In each case, however, the solutions are conditioned by the capital resources available, the political will of the local authorities and the attitudes and involvement of residents (Figs. 18 and 19).

Fig. 18: Plan for the renovation of a former garage building as a cultural centre, 'ArtZona', in the Nowa Huta district of Kraków.

Fig. 19: The recent re-landscaping and 'greening' of an area in the Ursynów district of Warsaw as a model for the popular upgrading of housing estates.

The governance of housing, particularly of the social (or formerly social) housing stock, at a local level, including its administration and management, is significantly constrained by the structure of tenure. Furthermore, the transfer of responsibility for housing issues from the central level (i.e. from the national governments) to local authorities without re-allocation of proportionate funding has led to very different policies and solutions being adopted by the latter, depending on the local context. In general, local governments are constrained by having limited power to carry out substantial changes and limited resources to do very much but also by having only indirect means of policy intervention, for example through spatial planning measures, local legislation and local taxes. These limitations on local agencies intersect with **issues of availability and affordability.** In some places empty housing stock is an issue, but in the majority of areas there is a shortage of decent housing units for medium and, more particularly, for low income households, although local authorities can do little to tackle this shortage. As a very recent analysis reveals, *"no new social housing policy has been developed to manage the increasing affordability problem on housing market, though there have been several attempts to improve the social housing system…."* (Hegedus 2013, p. 3). In any actions which aim at improving the affordability of housing, it seems essential to take into account the following variables: ability to pay; price inflation relative to interest rates and their

likely future behaviour; the area's level of unemployment and possible local opportunities for employment; the prices of dwellings and their rental values; mortgage and rent payments; tenure; the likely mobility or frequency of residential relocation caused by the aggregate demand for housing and the effects of price and rent levels (Berry & Hall 2001 quoted in the OECD report). In strategic planning at the urban level, the typical situations just depicted generally restrict local governments and other relevant housing agencies to rather indirect activities which are at least under local administrative control.

The improvement or redesign of public space and urban landscape is affected to a considerable extent by the ownership of land and tenure of housing. A relatively new set of basic problems has arisen in a few cities due to the rapidly expanding acquisition by private investors and developers of spaces which were hitherto, at least in many respects, public spaces or perceived as such by local inhabitants (or, indeed, acquisition of any space available according to the opinions of some nearby residents!). The clearest examples of such problems are found with the expansion of gated communities. One set of issues arising from the creation of these gated communities relates to newly restricted access to or, indeed, loss of accessibility to public space. These issues can be seen as resulting from changes in the pattern of land ownership and also as connected with issues about responsibility for management and maintenance of urban space.

6.4. Sustainable development and energy efficiency

At present, sustainable development constitutes one of the most important paradigms for planning the future of any city. For example, the Millennium Development Goals, among other objectives, focused on the goals set by cities to meet sustainability targets and on their capacities to do so. Such ways of thinking can be seen as quite strongly related to the attractions of implementing successful economic and cultural development in ways which guarantee a good quality of life and good living conditions well into the future. According to definitions used by the OECD and UN, sustainable development *"meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*. Urban planning oriented to sustainability has slowly but steadily become the core of strategic thinking about the future of cities. Having in mind the very broad meaning of this concept and the various ways of defining it, we will concentrate only on two broadly defined aspects of it: the problem of **reducing the carbon footprint of cities by energy efficiency and safety,** emphasising the socio-cultural and economic considerations involved; and the domain of environmental hazards which could be exacerbated by climate change, over-exploitation of natural resources and/or environmental degradation.

For post-socialist cities, becoming energy efficient can now be seen as one of their greatest opportunities for modernisation, offering the prospect of improving their reputations and projecting more positive images to the rest of the world as cities very actively engaged in the transition towards a more energy-efficient society.

The aim of this part is firstly to present some concepts, ideas and arguments which are particularly relevant to making the strategic objectives discussed in Part II operational, together with some examples of good practice, which demonstrate how particular objectives have been realised in specific contexts. The concluding section then discusses alternative frameworks and broad approaches which are needed to foster the implementation of such objectives and good practice by allowing the various key actors and agents in the urban arena to interact more constructively and fruitfully in the post-socialist context than was the case in the socialist era and, unfortunately, has too often been the case so far in the post-socialist era, at least to a fair extent. Particular priorities here include the need for local authorities to fully embrace proactive models of governance and to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders at local, city wide and regional levels in ways which diversify and strengthen the local economy and also promote a sense of engagement in a more cohesive civil society. These approaches should allow much wider participation by citizens and particular interest groups in the formation of long term development plans and/or development strategies for cities or districts than has generally been the case hitherto and should provide these plans with much broader public support, essential if they are to succeed. It is recognised that such new approaches require new ways of thinking, which does not generally come about quickly or easily. The role of a national urban policy and the need for such a policy are also discussed briefly.

7. Towards operational objectives and their implementation

Comprehensive sets of operational objectives must be adapted to the specific circum-stances of particular cities or urban districts. Therefore, in this chapter the only case studies presented are those where initiatives to try to solve particular problems have been tailored in some way to the local context and which have already been implemented successfully in that real world context. In addition, general concepts, new approaches and recent trends for tackling existing urban problems derived from a wide range of research investigations are put forward. More detailed sets of reports, models and examples of good practice are presented in Appendix 1 of the ReNewTown project documents and in the databases available online at www.renewtown.eu

7.1. Lessons drawn from past experience

From experience of the post-1989 transformations, on the institutional and ideological levels the most important consequences for urban governance relate to the transfer of control over space from central government bodies to local authorities through the introduction of a reformed, more genuinely democratic structure for local government, allowing local authorities to have new and much more autonomous roles. The new processes of consultation over plans and strategies initiated by these revived local governments have stimulated urban policy makers to search for new methodologies and new planning concepts to accommodate such participation. However, the institutional context for strategic planning established during the first years of transformation was in fact largely **dominated by activities related to observing, recording and accepting rather than shaping spontaneous development and other consequences resulting from the domination of the 'invisible hand of the market',** which was perhaps inevitable to some extent. A very good example is the story of Warsaw's '10th Anniversary Stadium', a former sports arena, located close to the city centre, which deteriorated significantly in the 1980s. In the 1990s this stadium became the site of the largest bazaar in Europe, serving mainly the former countries of the Soviet Union and was suddenly generating higher employment – though much of it illegal – than the entire manufacturing sector in Warsaw. Around 2010, however, this bazaar was closed and its spontaneous trading functions transferred to various locations on the outskirts of Warsaw or outside the city. The stadium was then redesigned in terms of infrastructure and architecture and became a modern national arena for sports and cultural events (hosting for example the UEFA European Football Championship in 2012). However, this strategic 'flagship' investment in Warsaw is currently struggling in economic terms, a problem which may be solved by further investment and development of the surrounding areas, which could acquire more urban commercial and cultural functions.

The majority of urban strategies during this initial period can be grouped into four different types. The first type is based on advantages of geographical location and accessibility and has three identifiable sub-categories: those attempting to benefit from the regional economy; those trying to benefit from internationalisation of the urban economy; and those endeavouring to benefit from the quality of a particular environment or its natural resources. The second category involves the improvement of the existing economy, particularly its restructuring through adaptation to the new requirements of the market. The third type mainly consists of a search for new functions for the city or for a new niche in the market. The fourth is concerned mainly with the creation of better living conditions and support for local initiatives (Węcławowicz 1998). In fact, it is now clear that development activities were generally characterised by uncoordinated interventions in particular urban districts in various fields of policy and by interventions from a range of 'departmental' bodies from different levels of the govern-

mental and local governmental hierarchy. In addition, the actual mechanisms for strategic management (according to P. Świaniewicz 2011) have weaknesses such as the lack of links between strategic and financial planning, goals being defined too generally and too many different goals being pursued (Box 10).

Box 10. Successful City Development Strategy according to the Cities Alliance

Effective city development strategies (CDS) have the following characteristics:

Internal consistency. *The strategic thrusts of a CDS should follow from the vision and analysis of a city's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.*

A targeted approach *that focuses on a few strategic thrusts, the products of tough choices. (Approaches which assign equal importance to many possible thrusts should be avoided).*

Measurable achievement *by using lean, powerful, results-oriented indicators.*

Cross-cutting strategic thrusts *that rely on a variety of activities and agencies.*
Clearly defined targets and responsibilities with responsibility for implementation clearly defined against definitive targets and timelines.

Incentives to drive performance, *which can take a variety of forms, including financial awards and community recognition.*

A flexible framework, but maintaining a constant vision *i.e. the strategic framework is flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions and tactics, but the vision remains constant over the medium term.*
CDS priorities reflected in budgets – the priorities of the CDS should be reflected in a city's budgeting and in its investment strategies.

Extended ownership *– while it is important to have a champion driving the CDS process, it is equally vital that ownership of the vision and strategy extends well beyond the champion, which is especially important if the champion is an elected official whose term will likely end long before the vision for the city will be realised.*

Source: http://www.citiesalliance.org/about-cds

Comparative research provides some valuable answers to questions about how urban policy has been structured, delivered and funded in different contexts, and also to the more basic question from our perspective of why some cities have been more successful in their regeneration than others (Leunig & Swaffield 2008). In the case of **Vancouver's regeneration,** success was associated with the fact that "*… ability to mobilise civic society and negotiate political settlements has allowed the city to put in place radical renewal and planning strategies…"*. The most important conclusion drawn from **the Dutch Local Partnership Approach to Regeneration** is accountability from the bottom up, which has "… *produced innovative and partnership-led regeneration, with cities working closely with local people, housing associations and businesses".* The conclusion drawn from the case of **the Ruhr agglomeration in Germany,** which used to have problems similar to other European cities affected by deindustrialisation and population loss, is that *"State-led regeneration initiatives have proved far less successful than those led by cities as they are more prone to misappraising the needs of the locality".* In the only examples concerning cities with a socialist legacy, i.e. Łódź and Warsaw, it was found that: *"a poor culture of accountability, unresponsive policy formulation and limited funding mechanisms have not produced the urban changes that many would like to see"* (Leunig & Swaffield 2008). In the conclusion to their report the latter authors stress: *"… the importance of engaging civil society and generating a culture of trust and innovative thinking when it comes to regeneration".* These case studies help to show that where civil society functions well and proposed plans for some type of development have gained wide public support, possibly after much discussion and debate in various public forums, it is normally easier for the development involved to take place, because there will be little opposition. However, when there are still significant imbalances in power and resources between agencies of civil society, such as local associations or groups of citizens, and the power and resources of central or municipal authority which has persisted to a certain degree from the 'ancien régime' of state socialism, change may be more problematic because it will tend to be resisted, for instance, at the grass roots level.

Governance in these post-socialist countries has evolved from traditional 'top-down' processes of decision making by central government and the administrative bodies of the state or by their local equivalents towards 'bottom-up' approaches. The latter has required a more socialised or interactive approach involving processes of steering, mediating and cooperating to create alliances between public and non-public groups and, ideally, trying to build some kind of consensus or basis for collaboration among the various actors and interest groups. An essential element of the shift from a top-down to a bottom-up approach to governance is obviously the incorporation of civil society by embracing and facilitating the participation and engagement of citizens in decision-making processes in the public realm. This can be facilitated through the introduction and adaptation of the new, innovative political measures and regulations concerning governance and subsidiarity that are linked to the Structural Funds.

However, it should be clear that in the longer strategic perspective post-socialist cities need to progressively eschew seeing themselves as being 'Client Cities' by steadily reducing their reliance on support from the European Union Structural Funds.

There are some difficulties, however, in trying to learn from experience elsewhere in the EU or in other parts of the world. The transfer of good practice of any kind or, more specifically, in relation to governance and policy from one context to a different one often encounters unforeseen difficulties. Even the attempt to apply good solutions to particular problems in one place to the same problems in another environment is rarely straightforward. Thus any endeavour to make a simple straight transfer of a very specific way of solving a fairly identical problem in another place, let alone the possible attempt to transplant an entire policy to a new context, usually entails certain modifications and adaptations to local conditions. Accordingly, R. Rose (1991) has identified **five levels of policy adaptation** (quoted in Kempen et al. 2006), namely **simple copying, emulation, hybridisation, synthesis and inspiration.** Whichever level of adaptation is used, careful appraisal is necessary in order to identify the conditions needed for successful transfer of experience. R. Kempen et al. (2006) list, among other things, the following necessary conditions for success: politicians and stakeholders having vested interests in the transfer succeeding; the existence of committed consultants and/or researchers representing parties at both ends of the transfer, who understand the problems and have a real influence on the politicians involved; and appropriate critical evaluation to facilitate the process of transfer. Nevertheless, a general message in this context may be to at least try to **learn from each other's mistakes and successes,** even when such transfers are not a complete success.

One of the best examples of possible learning from each other concerns a decline in population size, which is a particular problem for many post-socialist urban areas. Basically, there are **three possible policy responses to population decline.** The first is to **do nothing,** either denying that there is a problem or recognising the problem exists but not responding to it. The second idea is to try to reverse the trend by **stimulating population growth**. The third approach is to **accept the decline and to try to deal with its consequences** (Verwest 2011). Trying to benefit from the experience of those Western European Cities which have suffered from population decrease, often for more than three or four decades, it can be suggested that policy-makers should consider both of the latter two strategies i.e. the growth-orientated approach and the approach which accepts decline and tries to cope with and respond to its main results. Measures which could be effective here include: restricting suburban development around or beyond the periphery of the city; attracting foreign and national investors in order to stimulate job creation; decontaminating, regenerating and revitalising brown field areas in the inner city; and/or strengthening the functions of the public sector performed by second-tier administrative centres e.g. of districts within the city.

7.2. Formation of civil society and expansion of human capital

The basic elements of civil society, such as citizens' involvement in local affairs, the ability to organise themselves, the skills and education needed for participation and the political will to make a positive difference to quality of life in a neighbourhood are all, to some degree, preconditions for successful realisation of the other main strategic objectives. Conversely, a factor which tends to retard the participation of citizens in the processes of local decision making in post-socialist cities is the fact that residents often seem to have little sense of belonging to their local neighbourhood or of involvement in their local community and so are unable or reluctant to become better informed or more aware of local issues, which also means they have little motivation to engage with issues that may affect the neighbourhood. Inhibitions about becoming more active in local affairs may also be strengthened by awareness of increasing social differences within the local area.

The latter problem is partly a result of a certain degree of social exclusion and poverty resulting from a low level of skill and from dwellers in some areas of post-socialist cities occupying a weak position in the labour market, which makes it difficult or impossible for them to earn enough to participate in the normal social life of the community. This problem is obviously worse where there is high unemployment. The most effective method for improving one's social integration in such situations is **upgrading one's education and skills,** which tends to facilitate a better position in the labour market. A second important factor in social exclusion lies in the nature of some social networks or rather of these being weak or inactive in some urban areas of the formerly socialist countries, particularly among elderly and retired people and single-parent households. The most effective solution in such situations is naturally to **try to form a new social network** through such means as involvement in various activities and activity clubs, organisation of child care or the establishment of nursery schools, thereby creating a more accessible and mobile infrastructure for support. **The elimination of crime from neighbourhoods** and maintaining the public perception of a given area as 'safe' are equally important, as feelings of safety and security are among the most important aspects of quality of life. If people do not feel safe in an area, they are less likely to be socially active in it.

A number of programmes and initiatives in different countries of the EU, addressing various aspects of the problems just discussed, merit attention at this point. A programme in Spain provides financial support and other kinds of assistance for elderly people with physical impairments, whereas a project to provide older people in Ireland with a toll free telephone hotline aims to help them get in touch with one another and so maintain and extend their social networks (Boxes 11 and 12). A programme in the Mazovia Voivodeship in Poland aimed to improve the economic activity of people over 45 through training and support of various kinds, including financial support to facilitate participants in starting their own businesses. It can therefore be seen as trying to promote and expand human capital (Box 13). A project in Berlin

involves a strategy for good practice in community-led regeneration projects in deprived areas of the city (Box 14), which might be transferred relatively easily to other post-socialist cities, districts or quarters. A second project from Berlin involves improving the physical structure of building complexes through the creation of leisure places for children, a neighbourhood café and renovation of tourist apartments; it also shows how local communities can participate in successfully improving living conditions in their own local area (Box 15).

Box 11. Assistance cheques for the elderly.

In 2001 in Galicia in Spain a programme called 'Assistance Cheques' was established. The programme was implemented to assist older people with significant physical impairments who, at the same time, are subject to economic deprivation. Its main thrust is helping older people in need with the costs of care. Nevertheless, the programme also offers other forms of assistance, including access to appropriate accommodation, attendance at day-care centres and payment for home care services, as well as respite care to relieve family carers. A similar system can be found in Valencia. People can spend their cheques either on institutional or home care. They are thus free to buy services to assist them with home care (e.g. meals on wheels).

Source: Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion of Older People – Lessons from Europe, Working paper 308; Andreas Hoff, Oxford Institute of Ageing, October 2008.

Box 12. 'Senior help line' in Ireland

Basically, this is a toll-free telephone number. The hotline involved is still quite new and needs to be developed. At this stage, it is more or less just a chat line that enables older people to get in touch with one another. The services it provides need to be expanded with more funding. Eventually, it is planned to also offer advice and information.

Source: Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion of Older People – Lessons from Europe, Working paper 308; Andreas Hoff, Oxford Institute of Ageing, October 2008.

Box 13. Action to expand human capital: an incubator of mature entrepreneurship

Programme: The Human Capital Development Programme. Duration: December 2010 – December 2012. Value of the project: PLN 4,064,687.12. The main objective was to raise the level of economic activity of people over 45 in the Voivodeship of Mazovia in Poland through training and support. This was done by providing consultancy training for 50 people and financial training for 35 people wishing to start their own business within the duration of the project. There were many people interested in the project: over 200 people applied for it and 50 people were chosen (64 per cent of whom were inactive), including six disabled persons. The participants took part in psycho-educational workshops and training sessions focused on the needs of

people over 45. As a result of the financial support provided, 36 companies were established either in the tourist industry, in commerce (including online shops), in the automotive industry or in financial services.

Here the Foundation for the Promotion of Social Initiatives, POLPROM, created a model project for supporting entrepreneurship among mature people, giving them an opportunity to become self-employed. POLPROM also used the project to develop and test this model for such support (stimulating people who had long been economically inactive) and then spread knowledge of it so the ideas could be shared with other areas.

Source: Projects given prizes in the competition 'ESF Best Practices 2012'. http://www.efs.gov.pl/dzialaniapromocyjne/Documents/Dobre_Praktyki_2012_INTERNET.pdf

Box 14. The Socially Integrative City programme from Germany

The Socially Integrative City is a complex and comprehensive community-led local development scheme that combines a tight spatial focus, local participation and the integration of policies with human and financial resources. This federal programme, partially financed by ERDF and national funds, decentralises decision-making by delegating responsibility for small-scale projects to residents living in deprived areas selected by the Berlin Senate. The city of Berlin has in fact refined and extended the original programme's ideas. A distinctive para-institutional structure known as Quartiersmanagement (QM) is created in each selected neighbourhood and each QM team manages five types of Neighbourhood Funds, each covering a different type of project, and works with the direct involvement of residents. The Quartiersmanagement teams provide a platform for networking and interaction, enabling groups and actors to debate and identify local needs, values and responses. One of the anticipated effects of the programme is the empowerment of citizens, through collaboration and cooperation on projects.

Source: ReNewTown databases.

Box 15. Citizens' involvement in local affairs: Tower of Culture from Berlin Marzhan North-West

This project involved improving the physical structure of building complexes and the housing environment through the creation of a 'leisure place' for young people to spend their free time, opening a café in the neighbourhood and renovating tourist apartments for rent. All the sub-projects were run by volunteers with the support of 2 social workers. This example shows that the renovation of buildings and the improvement of living conditions is possible via the involvement of local communities in local affairs and events organised in their quarter.

Source: ReNewTown databases

7.3. Economic activity and unemployment

The increase of activism and in putting forward local initiatives of various kinds by local residents in urban areas of the former socialist countries discussed here is mostly associated with the problem of a very high local rate of unemployment. Not surprisingly, numerous initiatives to address this problem have been taken at local, regional and national levels. The basic message from all of these initiatives, however, is that projects attempting to increase local economic activity should normally be carried out by a professionally oriented body possessing specific skills and experience and organised in a different way from a local or urban government authority i.e. by some kind of development agency, whether profit making or non-profit making. Nevertheless, initiatives generated by local people or local organisations are usually helpful in attracting, encouraging and supplementing the work of such professional bodies (Box 16). The most difficult challenges in this context generally involve decisions about the location and the kind of investment to be made and these can nearly always be made best through approaches which are business-led and based on a realistic appraisal from the perspective of the market (Clark, Huxley & Mountford 2010). The practical experience of OECD suggests that **development agencies, of whatever kind, generally need to fulfil the following eight functions to be effective over a sustained period:** branding and international promotion; attracting and maintaining investment over at least the medium term or longer; business start-ups and growth; development of human capital; development of real estate, infrastructure and the 'urban realm' in general; developing initiatives of a social or green nature; finding partners to work with in facilitating and planning projects and creating a vision for them and with them; and provision or management of urban services. Such a development agency can also play a valuable role as regards the economics of projects, their leadership, their governance, their co-ordination and their implementation.

The development agency type of model seems to provide the best framework for governance of the promotion and implementation of economic activities and initiatives at the city and sub-regional levels (as the OECD's analysis of member countries indicates). It would also seem be a good framework for implementing such initiatives within particular cities or districts, which is the key element in our transnational development strategy. When selecting a framework or model to use in approaching these problems, it should be remembered that all development agencies are primarily 'market oriented' rather than being focused on the interests of citizens.

In the districts under discussion at this point, solving or mitigating the problem of high unemployment and few local businesses or jobs plus a programme of urban regeneration is not enough by itself to bring real improvement in the wider social and economic well- being of the area, if these specific improvements are not accompanied by general, broadly based economic progress and other developments (Box 16). This is because raising the standard

of living in an area also depends on a number of other important factors such as the area's quality of housing, the nature of its landscape and how good it is in terms of various aspects of sustainability and economic efficiency (for example as regards use of energy).

One possible solution to a lack of local employment for some areas may lie in the concepts of the 'cultural economy' and the 'experience economy' as an alternative to manufacturing (Harvey 1990, Scott 1997 and Gibson 2011). Such an 'eventification strategy' aims to stimulate local creative activities by turning space (i.e. real locations in urban or regional space) from manufacturing functions into functioning for the purposes of consumption or as the locus of events. The best example is the construction of a European Disneyland in Greater Paris, which took place through close partnership between public and private interests i.e. the powers of the state in planning and control of land use, support from regional authorities (viz. the Ile de France and City of Paris) and investment by the Walt Disney Company were all crucial to implementing this project (Lorentzen and Jeannerat 2012). An interesting discussion of two further examples of an eventification strategy, involving neighborhoods in New York and Berlin, is given by Jakob (2013).

Box 16. The 'Green job' projects implemented in the Małopolska region in Poland

These projects were part of the Human Capital Development Programme (Duration: September 1, 2008 – October 31, 2013. Value of the whole programme: PLN 14,186,433.00). The projects aimed at improving access to employment and supporting economic activity in the region. One project involved the land improvement and water equipment plant in Krakow employing 209 people to work on maintenance of drainage facilities for a period of 11 months. This project focused primarily on young people up to 25 years of age, who did not have any previous work or vocational experience, and on people over 45.

Participants in all projects run by the Human Capital Development Programme underwent relevant training and – what is most important – participated in vocational courses which were selected in accordance with the predispositions of the participants and the needs of the local labour market, including courses for truck or bus drivers, backhoe operators, welders, masons, graphic designers, carers for the elderly and the disabled, gardeners, warehousemen and forklift operators. Each participant also benefited from counselling and from workshops on interpersonal communication and learned how to become active on the job market. All of this training was deemed very successful: a lot of participants found a job; a few new businesses were opened; and 4 people co-founded a social co-operative society named 'Green Job'.

Source: Projects gaining awards in the competition 'ESF Best Practices 2012'. http://www.efs.gov.pl/dzialaniapromocyjne/Documents/Dobre_Praktyki_2012_INTERNET.pdf

7.4. Housing and landscape issues

Changes in the social needs of inhabitants plus changes in economic activity and in demographic structure have resulted in the fact that much of the inherited housing stock has become inadequate for meeting the contemporary aspirations of urban dwellers. As noted earlier, the physical condition and quality of much housing and public space dating back to the socialist era are usually viewed rather negatively. After 1989 the starting point for changing the soulless appearance of much architecture from the socialist era was to change the physical appearance of the neighbourhood, which was usually the easiest improvement to implement (Burgers & Vranken 2003). Any significant improvements in this domain normally have a direct impact on citizens' assessment of local authorities and communities and on their overall perception of a given district. Such strategies, however, need to be accompanied with information provided to the residents on what is going to be improved, how it is going to be done (e.g. in what form and what design is going to be used) and on possibilities for visiting the construction (or reconstruction) site. Such an approach may help to stimulate local interest and commitment. Thus Burgers and Vranken (2003) have argued persuasively that ".... physical restructuring can contribute to the increase of local social capital and feeling of commitment."

A general approach to improving the housing stock, which has already been implemented in a number of Central European cities, involves improvement of the existing structure by re-designing the external and internal parts of a building in a more modern way, introducing technological innovations like thermo-insulation and restructuring of the building's structure itself, together with detailed refurbishment (Kempen et al. 2006). Another solution involves partial or complete demolition of housing of the socialist period. Such decisions depend on the scale of housing needs in the whole country, region or particular city. In an urban population which is shrinking due to demographic trends and migration, it is more probable that solutions involving demolition will have a larger or even prevalent role in the longer term perspective. Hence, in recent decades, demolition was frequently adopted as a solution in the former East Germany, while in Poland this happened very rarely, due to a serious shortage of housing. According to research by RESTATE, demolition as an alternative solution to revitalisation or refurbishment may serve various purposes: preventing and combating segregation; reducing the crime rate; reducing the costs of maintenance; replacing inadequate housing; and adapting the housing stock to current housing preferences and new ways of urban living.

"*The demolition of a neighbourhood may provide an opportunity to improve the physical built environment but if the policy approach is restricted to this, it may not be effective. Successful refurbishment and redesign strategies take into account other things than the improvement of general living conditions of the population and the functioning of the community. Where the renewal of a neighbourhood could improve the positive identification and attachment to a given place, a range of actions is required to secure this effect. Without actions complement-*

ing new property investments, after regeneration stigmatisation may continue in the neigh-bourhood. The stigmatisation of a neighbourhood cannot be overcome by physical measures only, and it requires other social and economic actions." (Kempen, Murie, Khnorr-Siedow and Tosic 2006, p. 106).

The extensive revitalisation or renovation needed by the existing housing stock necessitates a range of schemes and measures (Boxes 17 and 18). First, it is necessary to analyse local conditions and try to gauge any social and economic constraints affecting the situation. The first key issue in any comprehensive improvement or renovation of housing estates is therefore an analysis of what the local authorities and local inhabitants concerned can afford in economic terms. The housing stock inherited from the socialist era is frequently characterised by poor quality generally, low technological standards, deteriorated materials, a history of inadequate maintenance, rather cramped space, poor insulation and a lack of modern facilities like lifts and new kitchens.

A possible intermediate solution is the inclusion into the existing area of housing of a new type of dwelling of a more modern and affluent character, resulting in the social status of the area rising and its perception from outside improving, as well as its quality of architecture. Such a solution can often lead to gentrification, though the social integration of old and new residents is a long and gradual process, usually disrupted by various conflicts. The most important barrier to social integration in places where new 'up-market' developments have taken place is probably the formation of 'gated communities', estates of various sizes physically surrounded by fences and a closed gate. At least, this seems to be the case in Warsaw.

The quality of public spaces, i.e. streets, courtyards, playgrounds, sport grounds, parks or squares, their accessibility and safety, their condition of maintenance, provision with art objects and their quality of design as regards contemporary needs are all important elements of the residential environment. Such attributes of public spaces also constitute some of the key elements influencing the social evaluation and perception of particular sections of an urban area. Public space properly planned in terms of creating physical infrastructure fostering social contacts and facilitating various kinds of activities, interaction and cooperation is of great importance. Good quality of public space, organised in a friendly and safe manner, is an indispensable element aiding and consolidating the formation of civil society. Therefore, the maintenance and aesthetic quality of public spaces should be the first priorities in any actions trying to improve the reputation or perceived image of a whole urban neighbourhood. Hence, a precondition for good management and maintenance is an accurate and up to date register or other public record of the ownership structure of the land to avoid problems arising from uncertainty of responsibility. In addition to that, all sorts of activities and events enhancing residents' involvement in the formation and maintenance of public space are essential. Such actions should, hopefully, strengthen a sense of community, a feeling of belonging to the surrounding neighbourhood and responsibility for it.

Public space between blocks of flats in the socialist past was usually maintained by city authorities or by housing co-operatives. Currently, due to ownership and tenure of property being made clearer through formal division of spaces and through definition and recognition of the rights of owners or restoration of ownership rights to the original owners before these were 'nationalised' by the socialist state, the re-organised, often private regulation and management of much open or public space (or former public space), i.e. essentially its governance, have been improved as regards maintenance because responsibility for any particular part is now clearer. However, there are still problem areas which generate various conflicts, particularly around new estates built since the end of socialism. Two types of problem with associated conflicts may be distinguished.

The first arises from changing needs, which can generate demands for some reconstruction or reallocation of space within existing, long established residential areas. For example, the demand for parking space in residential areas and almost everywhere else has increased substantially due to the considerable increase in private car ownership. As a result there can be demands to convert areas of courtyards, for instance, which were formerly play areas for children or some kind of green space, to parking. The second type of conflict is associated with different ideas on how to use a particular area of land and the acquisition or appropriation of portions of former public space, particularly green space, by private developers or individuals, usually to build housing. Such acquisition is usually associated with frequent protests against the conversion of green areas into construction plots or against the attendant increase in density of housing and reorganisation of routes of communication and access paths which follows. Potential property developers are constantly looking for 'good locations' with empty plots for new housing developments, which will generate relatively high profits for them, but will usually exacerbate traffic congestion and parking problems nearby. Housing estates built in the socialist era often initially had significant areas of green or undeveloped space adjoining them for several reasons: planning standards allowed for a future increase in private car ownership so vacant or green areas were left near the estate to accommodate this; or they might be built next to areas of green land which were part of an overall structure plan to provide 'green infrastructure' for the city.

In the case of Warsaw this took the form of several green 'wedges' or 'ribbons' running from near the centre to the periphery to act as 'green lungs' for the city, an imaginative and far sighted plan, which in fact dated back to the 1930s. Not surprisingly, property developers are attracted to such areas of undeveloped land, often with quite attractive surroundings, normally to build new housing designed to meet the needs of the 'post-socialist' era. Thus at least one substantial new gated housing development in Warsaw was located entirely across the middle of a green wedge, partly a result of the weakening of planning controls for some time early in the post-socialist period. In our social surveys one of the most noticeable complaints of residents was about the conflicts arising from the shortage of parking facilities. As a result of all

the factors just discussed, there is a constant tension between the demand for parking places by new entrepreneurs, the parking needs of the existing residents, increasing car ownership and the need to preserve green areas and playgrounds as the most valuable forms of public space.

Box 17. Revitalisation and citizens' involvement in local affairs: 'Trial Living'.

In order to revitalise the inner city of Görlitz in the former East Germany (GDR) and to make it more attractive to local residents, the Technical University of Dresden came up with an idea for a project called 'Trial Living'. This idea was supported by the municipal urban development department and a housing association, WBG. Characterised by many 'Grunderzeit' buildings (i.e. constructed in the 'founding years' – broadly the second half of the 19th century), which had been neglected during the GDR era, the inner city of Görlitz had a negative image as a place to live which caused a housing vacancy rate of around 30% in 2007. The Technical University of Dresden, in particular the Competence Centre for Revitalising Urban Development, revealed from one of their surveys the necessity of creating a good communication strategy for conveying the attractiveness of living in the inner city centre in the face of a lot of negative prejudice. As a reaction to this, the idea to invite local residents to live in a fully refurbished apartment in the inner city for one week was invented. In this project, local residents were given a chance to inhabit an inner city Grunderzeit building and find out more about the positive and negative sides of living in the centre. In parallel, the University carried out a research study based on social surveys and evaluated the experience of the people participating from oral and written interviews. The results of the study helped to gain more insight into how to raise the levels of acceptance and appreciation of living in an inner city district.

This project was the first one of its kind and it was recognised as a successful example for other cities like Meiningen, Leipzig and Berlin to follow. However, the projects initiated later were implemented without the follow up social research.

Source: ReNewTown databases

Box 18. Preservation, maintenance and revitalisation of solidly built buildings, neglected during the later socialist era and in the decade after: 'Guarded Houses'

The 'Wächterhaus' ('Guarded Houses') project was carried out by the HausHalten e.V. Association. The project was started by ordinary citizens (i.e. actors or agents from 'civil society') who founded the association in 2003, aiming to preserve architecturally significant buildings which could not have been renovated before that point. Usually these building were threatened with demolition in the medium term and many still are. The idea of 'Guarded Houses' is to put into effect a concept for the recovery of these frequently vacant buildings, often threatened with weather damage, fire raising and vandalism. In order to achieve their objective, the association brought the building owners, who are often rather helpless regarding building maintenance or lack the necessary resources, into contact with potential 'users', who were looking for a space to realise their own businesses or creative ideas. The basic idea is to prevent degeneration of the buildings by usage. The users are free to use the premises for their own purposes, paying only utility and running costs. In return, they are responsible for the maintenance and repair of the buildings, which stops the ongoing processes of decay.

Source: ReNewTown databases

7.5. Sustainable development and energy efficiency

Among the constituents of the concept of sustainability, a key element for post-socialist urban space is energy efficiency because the quality of housing in the socialist era was, unfortunately, such as to generate a huge waste of energy. It is easy to argue that this is the most important single problem as regards sustainability for post-socialist cities and it is helpful to recall here that several aspects of it have already been discussed and partly resolved. The improvement of energy efficiency and energy consumption in housing estates is therefore still one of the top priorities (Box 19).

Important elements of sustainability involve as well the organisation of urban transport and patterns of commuting, particularly the way these are affected by the spatial organisation and the physical structure of cities and neighbourhoods. Under the aegis of the 'compact city' paradigm, the capacity for encouraging and assisting journeys in the city to be made on foot has emerged in recent decades as potentially one of the most energy-saving features of a city's spatial structure, while 'pedestrian friendly space' has been increasingly seen as an attractive space for social contacts and interaction. The formation and promotion of pedestrian space through the concept of 'Walkability' started in the USA and Canada as a reaction against the constant degradation of the pedestrian environment and the continual formation of more barriers for the free movement of urban dwellers (Forsyth & Southworth 2008). Through changing travel behaviour (Box 21), these concepts also seem to potentially provide a useful part of the solution to the problems caused by shortage of parking space and to various other problems exacerbated by modern urban transport, not least pollution and carbon emission.

By promoting walking and cycling, this approach also increases the physical activity of individuals. Thus this part of the strategy, derived from recent ideas in urban planning and design where they were put forward partly in response to the need to take account of the impact on the environment of urban transport systems, may contribute as well to an improvement of health in cities.

A related concept, called Home Zones, has been developed in the UK. The basic idea of this is that streets in residential areas should give priority to the movement of pedestrians or to any social or recreational activity in the street, like children playing or cycling around freely on any part of the road surface. Cars are not excluded but are required to move at little more than a fast walking speed and to give way to people on foot or on cycles. This whole idea was originally invented in the Netherlands in the early 1970s as the Dutch concept of a woonerf and has become widely implemented and well accepted in the Netherlands for the range of improvements in the quality of life it nearly always brings to streets, not least an increase in social interaction between neighbours and a stronger sense of community, thus strengthening civil society. In some neighbourhoods where Home Zones have been created in UK over the recent decade, it has been claimed that this has led to

stronger, more vibrant and diverse communities, fewer empty properties and has even reduced crime. Experience shows clearly that the key to a successful Home Zone is to involve the local community from the outset, so that those involved are well informed on the needs and concerns of the residents – young and old alike. Research also shows that many cities, including Bonn, Cologne, Hamburg and Munich, have reported an increase in the number of visitors, often as much as 50%, following the creation of pedestrianised zones. An interesting phenomenon was observed from this: people in cars do not window shop, whereas people on foot do. Moreover, pedestrian zones encourage types of development based on self-employment and microeconomic activity. They are also places suitable for public performances, which can be of a fairly spontaneous kind e.g. street theatre, music and artistic shows (Box 20). Involvement with such performances in streets free of vehicles, even just as spectators, can raise the sense of involvement of individuals with a particular place and the feeling of participating in an urban community. Street theatre or other forms of street entertainment for young and old can also help to bring together people of different backgrounds in terms of age, ethnicity, race, religion and culture. In other words, 'pedestrian friendly zones' can make a contribution to an increased awareness of being part of a civil society.

Box 19. The improvement of energy efficiency: the case of the 'Jary' housing co-operative in Ursynów (Warsaw, Poland)

The work of this housing co-operative shows how to improve low energy efficiency through thermo-insulation, combined with the renovation of multi-family housing (replacement of windows, reconstruction and new fittings).

The buildings were insulated to save energy and decrease heating costs. This resulted in ecological and financial improvements for the housing estate and individuals.

Additionally, the appearance of the buildings was freshened up – grey facades were replaced.

The quality of life improved as a result of many simultaneous investments: thermo-modernisation; visual aspects; and improvement of the buildings' surroundings (parking places, garages, green areas and playgrounds). One effect was to give better conditions for sport and leisure in the place of living.

Improved conditions for private enterprises were also created, achieved by designing commercial areas, which resulted in job creation and a decrease in unemployment. Currently, the 'Jary' housing estate provides a wide range of the services available in the area.

Another economic result of the physical improvements is a rise in the value of property in the area. Thanks to the measures taken in a part of the area, housing and other property prices rose across the entire area. These results may be found in the 'Jary' housing estate and in other housing estates nearby in the Ursynów district in Warsaw.

Source: ReNewTown databases

Box 20. Pedestrian zone: the case of Northmoor Home Zone in Manchester

Here, the Urban Art Project encouraged local creative people by promoting and helping to exhibit their work. The 'ImiTate' Gallery was set up in an empty terraced property, where local artists, including elderly residents who had never painted before, exhibited their paintings. This project won the prestigious British Urban Regeneration Association Award for Best Practice in Regeneration. The judges believed that the project contributed significantly to creating real community involvement in the area and gave many of the residents new skills and confidence. Using urban art as a means of generating community involvement and capability is unusual, but in this case it worked.

Source: Home Zones – Challenging the future of our streets. Department for Transport, UK, 2005.

Box 21. Made for Walking

"The structural elements illustrated throughout Made for Walking – streets, blocks, sidewalks, and connected open spaces together with the intricate mixing of uses – make walking and biking convenient and enable mobility with a vastly reduced carbon impact. These qualities, combined with a comfortable streetscape, create the type of pedestrian-oriented environment that lures people out of their cars. A few other physical qualities may not contribute directly to lowering a place's carbon footprint but are also essential ingredients in a successful urban neighbourhood. These elements, which can be designed in a place to add value, include the things all of us need in varying degrees – greenery, privacy, variety, and a sense of spaciousness."

Source: Campoli J. 2012, Made for Walking: Density and Neighbourhood Form. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, New Hampshire.

8. Conclusion. What to do with the post-socialist cities? From practice to strategic thinking.

This conclusion is derived from a number of sources of information, of experience, of expert knowledge and of conceptual perspectives: research conducted jointly with the participants of the ReNewTown project; review of a wide range of research literature; perusal of various databases and websites; conferences and consultations with various professionals and experts in relevant fields and discussions pursued via networks of these and other interested parties; and our own long standing research on mechanisms of transformation in the cities and metropolitan areas of Poland and other parts of Central Europe. The answer to the question posed in the title of this section in fact draws on experience and everyday practice from over 20 years of observing political, social and economic transformation processes in Central and Eastern Europe. In conceptual terms (and possibly in some practical ways too) a significant number of the concepts, proposals and solutions put forward here for cities and their development are relevant not only to the post-socialist realms of Central and Eastern Europe but may be relevant also to many cities elsewhere in the world. Moreover, in this wider context, it is worth emphasising that the concept of the post-socialist city as a framework for guiding analysis and explanation can have the drawback of imposing a way of thinking about the cities involved which puts too much emphasis on seeing them purely as products of ideology i.e. as cities initially shaped for over 4 decades by the 'ideology' of socialism then reshaped by the new dominating ideologies of an intermediate or transitional stage between the former and neo-liberalism. Putting these historical and ideological blinkers aside, in the last decades a number of broad models for the future development of cities have been proposed which may well have some relevance to post-socialist cities: the compact city; smart growth or smart cities; the sustainable city; the inclusive city; the resilient city; the just city; cittaslow; the new urbanism; and many others. A recent new phenomenon involves devising post-crisis strategies with particular attention to concepts relevant to strategies for competitiveness. For example, OECD generally focuses on development based on 'green growth' or a 'green economy'. The latter approach stresses that greater efficiency can lead to a form of economic growth which can bring cost savings which raise well-being and improve environmental health; this involves a model of economic development based on green or renewable forms of energy.

At this point, however, **the dominant neo-liberal approach to the role of local government at a district or city level needs some consideration.** In general, the application of market theory to the functioning of local communities remains too radical because local governments cannot be treated like markets, particularly in the European context, where cities have followed historically diverse paths of development which have fostered and enriched cultural diversity and local distinctiveness or uniqueness. The latter diversity is the outcome of constant interaction between the state, the market and local cultural

traditions, which in the case of the cultural heritage of post-socialist cities have both positive and negative consequences.

According to urban regime theory (Stoker 1998) or contingency theory, **it is possible to form a coalition between citizens, local and external investors and local authorities in order to shape cities** (Mossberger, Clarke and John 2012), but the final results may vary from case to case, depending on the scale of local participation in urban affairs and other economic, political and cultural factors and processes within cities. A gradual shift from the narrow concept of 'local government' (i.e. essentially conventional formal local authorities) to the wider and more holistic idea of 'local governance' is an essential element in these approaches because, among other advantages, the latter concept takes into account the fact that conventional local government at a district or city level does not have all resources (particularly economic and legal) necessary to accomplish its goals. Therefore, ideally collaboration with citizens (hopefully, part of 'civil society') should generally be 'de rigeur' for local authorities. The first steps should involve building trust between the supporters of a strategic project and local community partners, while the second should include complete recognition and discussion of their needs and preferences. Other important features, in the contemporary mobile society, should include the ability of local communities to assimilate newcomers and immigrants, who may bring innovation and progress but perhaps also some problems or difficulties, and to turn them into partners within the wider community.

In practice, **local authorities should adopt proactive models of governance** for improving the cohesion of local society and social collaboration that take account of the wide range of socioeconomic 'spill-over' or 'externality' affects noticeable in their city. They should also put a strong emphasis on promoting and supporting local entrepreneurship, rather than mainly trying to attract outside firms. Starting this from within, they should try to diversify the local economy rather than attract one or two large companies or industries from outside. Their obligation is to recognise that a good quality of life for highly skilled workers is a precondition for the catalytic effect of economic growth in a district or a city and improves its competitiveness.

Post-socialist urban space needs various strategic perspectives at appropriate spatial levels which can probably be articulated best in the form of long-term development plans. Such plans and development strategies should be integrated hierarchically from the lowest to the highest levels i.e. from a local community or neighbourhood to a district level, then to the scales of small or medium sized cities, larger cities, metropolitan areas and urban systems at regional and national levels. Unfortunately, the urban problems of post-socialist cities and urban districts reveal only too clearly the lack of policies for managing urban growth. Some of the most important concerns here are the lack of a policy for housing at a national scale and of legislation which could prevent urban sprawl.

The first step on the path towards the creation of groups supportive of the preceding types of strategy could be the formation of an effective political coalition around pragmatic objectives like a development strategy for a city or district (as an integral part of the strategy for the whole city). Such a coalition requires the formation of a political alliance of different interest groups and of a range of social groups plus a strategy likely to attract and recruit future potential allies. For example, the inclusion of various urban social movements as allies of a development strategy often still remains something of an unrealised possibility.

Clearly, **there is no standard strategy for solving the place-based problems of urban areas.** Each post-socialist district or city needs a coherent strategic framework which will allow its policies to be integrated within the whole city region or within the network of cities forming a metropolitan area; this should be designed to facilitate cooperation between municipalities and functional urban areas (FUA in OECD nomenclature). The final outcome of the strategy should be a shift from 'low aspiration space' to 'high aspiration space'; but transferring problems to another part of the city should be avoided.

In general, **a national urban policy should be formulated as a guide for local government at sub-regional or urban scales** as well as for those in government administration, the business community and any relevant social and non-governmental organisations. This policy should set out the intentions, main objectives and strategy of central government towards urban problems. Problems which are manifest at more local levels and strategies to address them could then be formulated in more coherent way.

However, **the most important challenge involves making urban areas less vulnerable to political, economic and environmental changes.** Among other things, this requires people to change their whole mental awareness and outlook and to acquire a more modern, forward looking, resourceful and adaptable way of thinking, a process which is probably the slowest in relative terms of all the processes involved in the transformation. One of the best examples of a field where such change is needed is that of environment issues, particularly where these concern energy saving. **New forms of governance and particularly a new relationship between civil society and the formal structures of local democracy and government are clearly essential for post-socialist cities to be able to respond to future urban challenges.** This needs 'benchmarking' types of investigation, plus the implementation of exercises designed to gain foresight on a much wider and longer scale, as well as regular monitoring of progress.

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Renovation of public spaces in Velenje (pilot action)

- ◎ Delovna akcija ReNewTown 2012
- ◎ Velenjski brigadirji

Museum of Socialist Curiosities in Hnúšta (pilot action)

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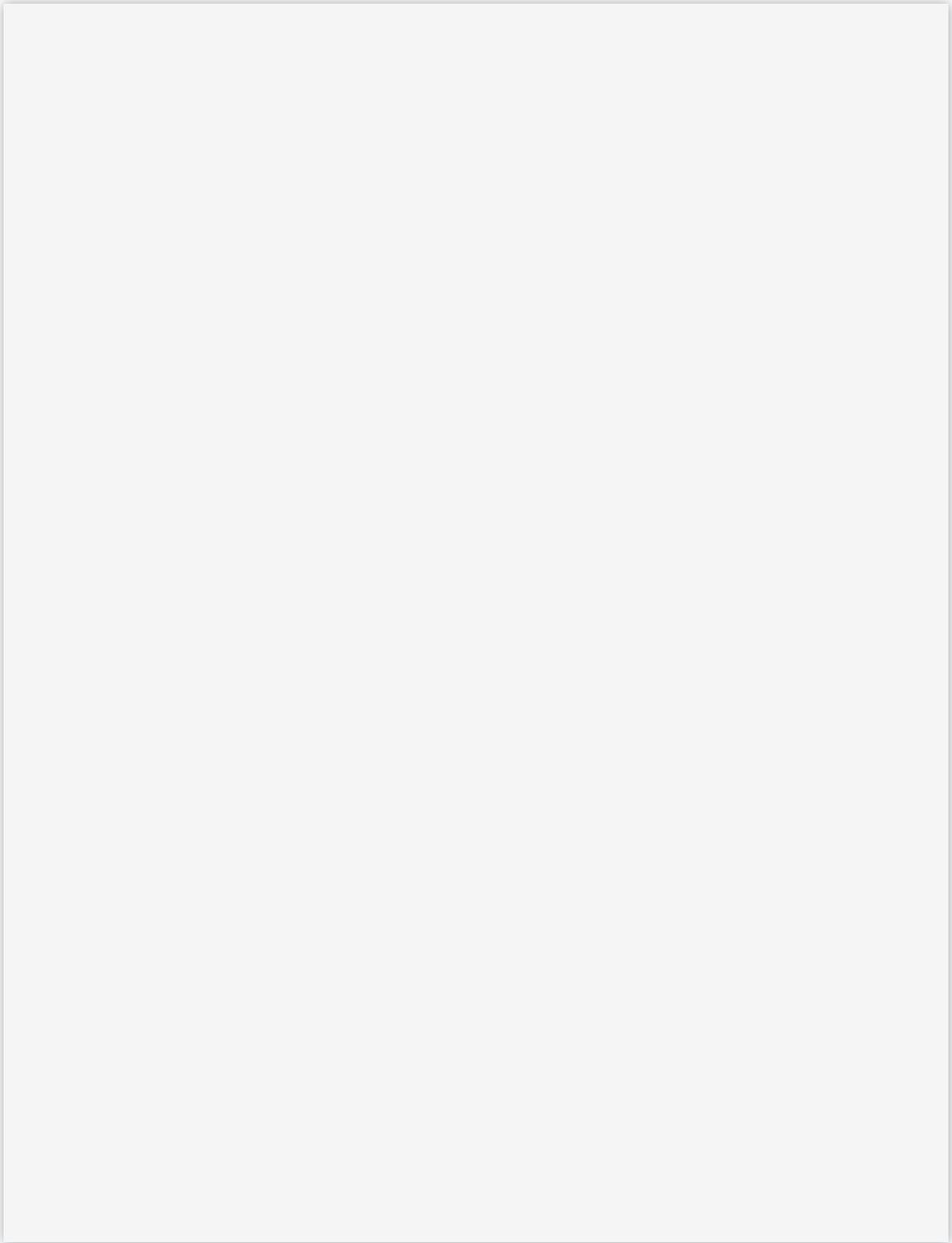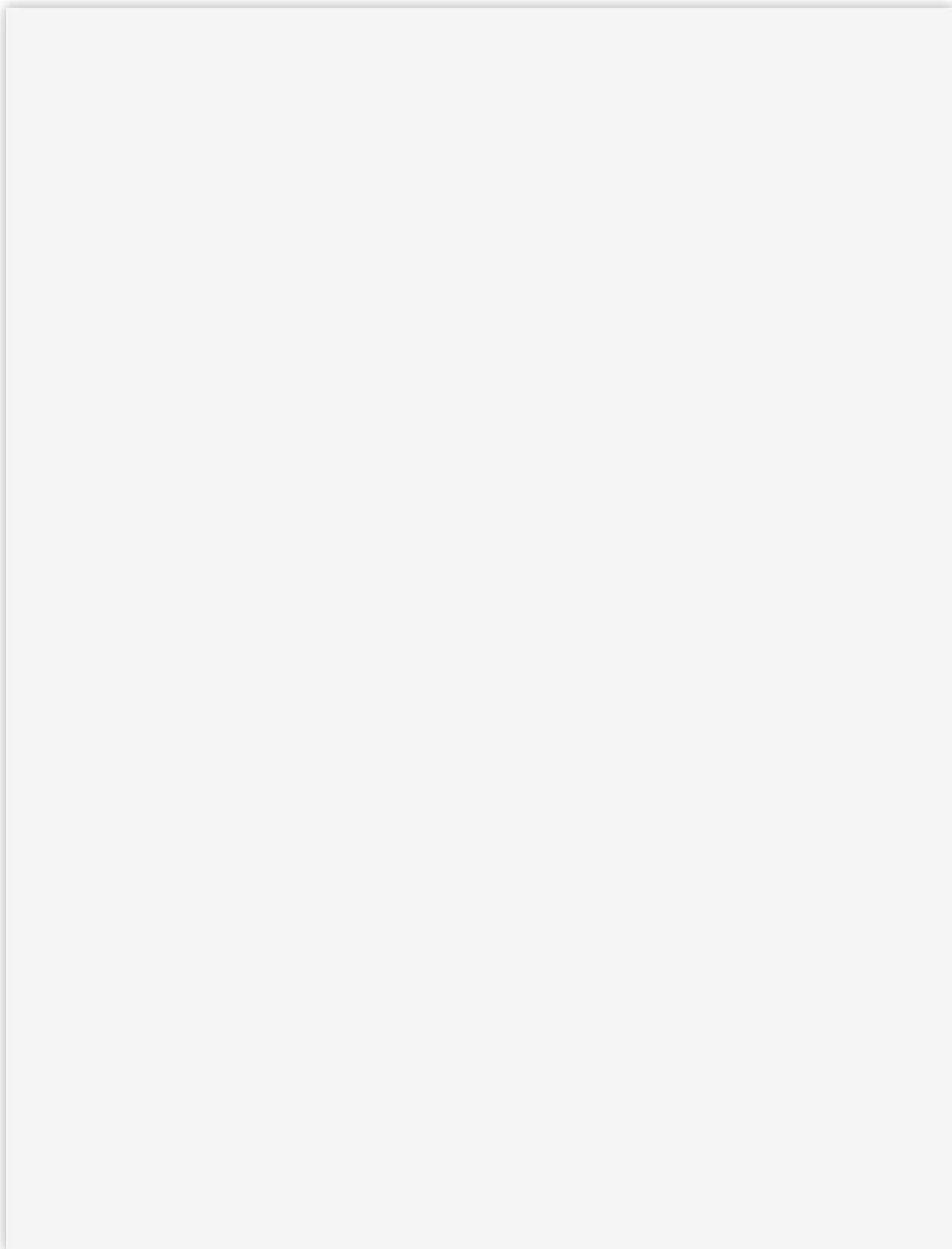
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